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GRAMMYS GRAB BAG

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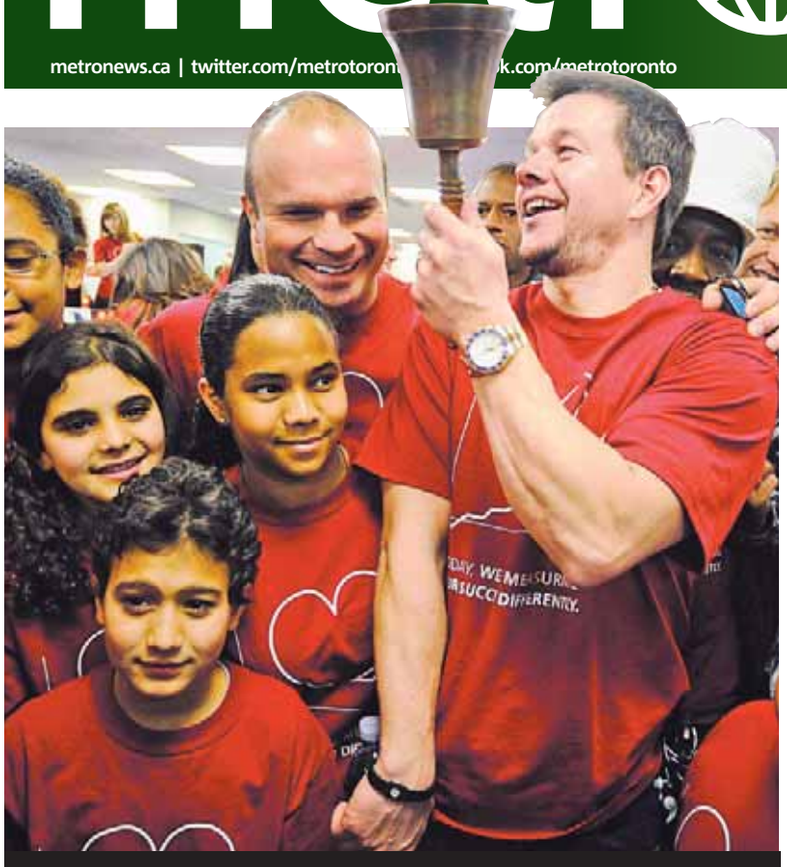

MARK AND TIE: SOFTIES AT HEART?

Actor and producer Mark Wahlberg, with his good friend ex-Leaf Tie Domi, met kids and made calls to clients in an effort to raise money for children's charities at the Toronto Stock Exchange trading floor on Wednesday. The celebs took part in CIBC Miracle Day, one of Canada's largest single-day fundraisers for children's charities. COLIN MCCONNELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

No 'harm to the public' in letting Ford stay: Judge

Mayor's appeal to be heard Jan. 7. City Hall likely to be quiet before then because of holidays

Now Toronto waits.

A judge decided Wednesday to let Mayor Rob Ford keep his job until an appeals court rules on his conflict-of-interest case sometime this winter. The decision eliminates any chance of the messiest outcome previously possible: Ford being returned to office on appeal after someone else already took over.

The decision also leaves the city with a teetering mayor-in-limbo presiding over the process of setting the 2013 budget, potential challengers cooling their heels at least temporarily and Ford attempting to project strength and stability even as he acknowledges he is "prepared for the worst."

The appeal will be heard on Jan. 7. A decision is expected in the following weeks. If not for the stay ordered by Ontario Superior Court Justice Gladys Pardu, Ford would have been forced to vacate his office by Tuesday under a decision issued by Superior Court Justice Charles Hackland last Monday.

The unusually quick appeal date helped convince Pardu that there would not be "any harm to the public interest" if she granted a stay. Ford's case also benefited from the endorsement of the opposing lawyer, Clayton Ruby.

"I'm very pleased with today's decision, can't wait for the appeal and I'm going to carry on doing what the people elected me to do," Ford told reporters at city hall. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Learning curve

"You get hit over the head with a sledgehammer ... and you do things a little differently."

Coun. Doug Ford on why his brother will change in the wake of Hackland's ruling

Teachers to stage strike

Elementary school teachers in the Avon Maitland and Ontario North East school boards say they're picketing Monday PAGE 4

Nobody lent a helping hand

Why did subway riders leave a man to die on the tracks? It was the "bystander effect," a psychologist says PAGE 18

Jon Bon Jovi's halfway there

At 50, the singer's not ready for early retirement, but he can't exactly move like Jagger either PAGE 46

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Slower response times

Fire cuts could hike insurance, ex-chief warns

Bill Stewart
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Retired Toronto fire chief Bill Stewart has weighed in on proposed cuts to the fire budget, warning that property owners could face higher insurance premiums and response times will worsen.

To freeze the 2013 budget at the 2012 level, the department is proposing to delete 104 vacant positions and permanently remove five trucks, cutting the fleet to 123 vehicles.

Fire officials concede the fire department is currently not meeting standards that call for the first truck's travel time to be within four minutes and all required trucks to be on scene within nine minutes, 90 per cent of the time.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Driver co-operating

Girl, 5, hit by car in front of school

A five-year-old girl was rushed to hospital with a head wound and broken leg after a car struck her and an 80-year-old crossing guard.

Police said the pair was struck shortly before 4 p.m. in front of Maplehurst Public School in Burlington, located near King Road and Plains Road East. They were in the crosswalk on Plains Road. The driver remained on scene.

The girl's condition is serious, according to Halton EMS, and she needed to be taken to a trauma centre for treatment. The guard sustained only minor injuries. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Metrolinx defends free parking in lots

Fare is fair? GO hike coming, but still no charge for leaving your vehicle

As the price of commuting increases around the region with fare hikes and talk of new taxes to pay for transit expansion, at least one cost remains constant.

GO Transit continues to maintain it has no plans to charge customers to park in the 61,102 spots in its frequently overflowing lots.

But the "free parking" policy has some questioning whether Metrolinx, the provincial agency that operates GO, is out of step with the Toronto region's fiscal reality.

After the Metrolinx board approved a five per cent GO fare hike, CEO Bruce McCuaig confirmed Wednesday there are no changes in the works to the parking policy.

"Right now our business model has the parking charge embedded in the price of the ticket. As we look at how we continue to evolve the system, we may have to look at that, but right now we're not" intending to charge, he said.

Former Metrolinx board member Paul Bedford said GO should charge for parking to help pay for transit expansion.

"Nothing is free, including parking. This is especially true for all those brand new multi-storey parking garages," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Incentive needed: Rider

- Given the millions Metrolinx is pouring into building new parking decks, GO rider Dan Hammond says those who ride and walk to the station deserve an incentive for doing the right thing.
- "The incentive should be for all people who are not using parking," said Hammond, who belongs to Transport Action Ontario, a rail and sustainable transportation advocacy group.
- A new six-tier parking deck with 1,381 spaces that opened in Oakville cost $41.1 million.

'Black Pete' only visits once a year

The controversial "Black Pete" gives out candy to children at the Sinterklaas parade in the Distillery District on Wednesday. Sinterklaas is a traditional winter holiday figure still celebrated today in the Netherlands and Belgium, and "Zwarte Piet," or "Black Pete," was his companion. Some experts believe Sinterklaas is one of the sources of the holiday figure we call Santa Claus in North America. ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Securities Commission

Toronto stock promoter banned — again

For the second time in five years, a former Toronto stock promoter has been banned from the securities industry by the Ontario Securities Commission.

Robert Patrick Zuk is prohibited from trading or acquiring any securities for 20 years for his role in what's known as an "advance-fee" scheme in the U.K., the OSC ruled following a brief hearing on Wednesday.

Zuk is also prohibited from becoming an officer or director of any public company, or acting as an investment fund manager for 20 years. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Illegal ride

Uber taxi charged with licensing offences

City officials say a company offering a smartphone app to hail taxis and limos in Toronto is operating illegally.

The city has charged Uber with 25 municipal licensing offences, including operation of an unlicensed taxi brokerage and unlicensed limo service, since they began operating in Toronto in late summer.

The company doesn't have its own fleet. Uber gives the smartphone, as well as the dashboard cradle it sits in, free to cab drivers from other companies who sign up. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Got sheep?

Raw-milk advocate charged with theft

An Ontario farmer embroiled in a legal battle with the province over producing and selling raw milk is now facing charges arising from the removal of sheep from a quarantined farm.

Michael Schmidt and three others are charged following an investigation into the removal of 31 sheep from a farm on April 2. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency says those charges include obstructing an inspector and conspiracy to defraud the public service.

Schmidt has denied having anything to do with their removal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Having a spectubular time singing carols

Mary Ann Fratia conducts the first half of the show at the 21st Annual Tuba Christmas Festival and Sing-a-long at Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto on Wednesday. Low-brass players and singers performed Christmas carols and seasonal music at the square. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Let private sector bid too: Hudak

Government service contracts. Tory leader says contracts should be awarded on a 'level playing field'

There should be legislative changes that would allow more groups to bid on government service contracts, Progressive Conservative Tim Hudak said Wednesday.

Businesses and private-sector unions should be able to compete with public-sector unions for jobs in food services, transportation, information technology, construction and building maintenance, he said.

"When you have closed tendering, it's only a couple of steps away from corruption," Hudak said. "And you don't get good quality services at the end of the day."

Standing in front of the Toronto District School Board's offices, Hudak pointed out that the board's obligation to give its union all building maintenance jobs resulted in a pencil sharpener being installed at a cost of $143.

"If you were hiring a handyman for your own home, you wouldn't take the first person that comes along, have them move in with you, and then use the exact same person every time you need your roof repaired no matter what the quality of service," he said.

His test? If you can find the service in the Yellow Pages, it should be open to competitive bids, Hudak said.

Taxpayers in Indiana saved 30 per cent per meal at state correction facilities after the governor contracted out commercial services, he said.

Extending bidding on public-service contracts to other groups will help save money for the cash-strapped government, Hudak said, which is facing a $14.4-billion deficit.

"This doesn't mean it's pro-union or anti-union, it's neutral," he said.

"Whoever can provide the best quality service — whether a public-sector union, a private union, a small business — it's a level playing field to let everyone succeed and give it their best shot."

The Tories have also recently proposed selling the LCBO.

Hudak's "Tea Party-type ideas" won't work, said NDP Leader Andrea Horwath.

"What his ideas do is drive down wages ... (and) squeeze more people out of the middle class," she said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak THE CANADIAN PRESS

Easy booze, not cheap booze

Booze in the corner stores is about convenience, not reduced prices, Tory Leader Tim Hudak said Wednesday.

- Hudak said the purpose of his proposal to put beer, wine and spirits in corner stores, supermarket or private specialty stores is to make it easier for Ontario consumers to buy alcohol.
- "I think our model is actually of more convenience for consumers," he told reporters. Hudak has not provided details on what the future holds for LCBO.

Prank. Student's yearbook photo exposes more than a handsome smile

No one at Mother Teresa Catholic Secondary School in London, Ont., saw it coming until it was too late.

A graduating student produced a unique glimpse of some of his personal software while posing for a group photo of the school's news team.

The prank was not discovered until students opened their yearbooks last Friday.

By the time staff noticed the yearbook contained nudity, only 360 copies from a press run of 1,300 remained undistributed.

The photo will be replaced with a sticker of the same image, doctored to hide the exposed parts. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

North East and Avon Maitland teachers to strike Monday

Elementary-school teachers in the Avon Maitland and Ontario North East school boards say they'll be staging a one-day strike on Monday.

The teachers say they have exhausted their options at the bargaining table following no board reports through conciliators.

The Avon Maitland District School Board has schools in communities such as Stratford, Wingham and Goderich, while the Ontario North East District School Board covers communities such as Timmins, Kirkland Lake and Iroquois Falls.

Ballot results

The ETFO said 92 per cent of more than 46,000 members who cast a ballot during an online vote this week voted in favour of a one-day political protest if Broten uses Bill 115.

The union says the strike is to protest the legislation that gives Education Minister Laurel Broten the ability to stop strikes by teachers and lockouts, and impose a collective agreement.

Meanwhile, the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario says a solid majority of elementary teachers across the province have voted in favour of a one-day political protest if Broten uses the provisions of Bill 115 to shut down strikes or impose a collective agreement.

Broten has scheduled a news conference for Thursday morning to address the strikes announced by the teachers in Avon Maitland and Ontario North East.

"I understand parents are concerned about the impact of this on their families," Broten said Wednesday in a release.

"I am taking the time to consider all the options available to our government," she said.

"This vote affirms once again that it is our members who determine their actions through democratic processes, contrary to Minister Broten's derogatory comments about union leaders this week," ETFO president Sam Hammond said in a release. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dude, my jokes are up here

Whitney St. John of the Naked News does her stand-up schtick at Yuk Yuk's comedy club on Richmond Street Wednesday. Five anchors from Toronto-based Naked News performed in what's billed as the "world's first-ever nude stand-up comedy event." AARON HARRIS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Pan Am Games. COC announces $2.6M for Canadian athletes

Canadian Olympic athletes Donna Vakalis and Jason Burnett speak at a COC media event at the U of T Wednesday. ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

With Wednesday's $2.6-million funding announcement for athletes who qualify for the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games, Canada has issued a challenge to the rest of the competing countries, Toronto Games CEO Ian Troop said.

"In my mind, Canada has served notice that we will bring our 'A' game to the 2015 Games and it's to stand on the podium in July 2015. Other countries will have to step up and bring their top athletes as well," Troop said Wednesday during a news conference at Varsity Centre where the Canadian Olympic Committee funding announcement was made.

"History shows that the Pan Am Games are a great indicator of future Olympic success. The Toronto 2015 Games are an important stop for all athletes from all countries on the road to Rio for Olympic glory. In fact, we're working with the international sports federations to make sure our sporting events will be Olympic qualifiers for Rio."

The funding given to individual sporting federations will be used to ensure every qualifying athlete will be able to compete and attend every competition without worrying about whether they can afford to attend the necessary events they need to be at to make the Canadian team.

Canada plans to send more than 1,000 athletes to the July 10-26 Toronto Games, more than double the number who competed in Guadalajar in 2011. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Condos take big hit as GTA home sales drop

Boom days are over. Condo market sees biggest declines in Toronto, a far cry from earlier bidding wars

Home sales continue to slide and prices soften, especially in the 416 region, according to the Toronto Real Estate Board, which recorded a 16 per cent decline in sales compared with November 2011.

Condos took the biggest hit with resale transactions down 25.5 per cent across the GTA and prices down an average of 2.3 per cent. The biggest declines in condo prices were in the City of Toronto, where they were down almost four per cent year over year.

Overall, resale house prices held relatively steady across the GTA, up 1.6 per cent year-over-year to an average of $485,328. But that's a far cry from the boom days and bidding wars that defined the market up until last spring, with "for sale" signs now gracing front lawns an average of 30 days.

Quoted

"The share of detached homes that sold for over $1 million was down substantially, which influenced the overall average price."

Jason Mercer, TREB senior manager

Sinking sales

Sales of previously owned condos sank by 25.1 per cent in the City of Toronto and 26.5 per cent in the 905 regions. Prices were down 3.9 per cent in Toronto and up 2.5 per cent in the 905 regions over last November, with prices averaging $350,540 and $279,483 respectively.

"Transactions have been down on a year-over-year basis since June, after being up substantially in the last half of 2011 and the first half of 2012," said Ann Hannah, president of the Toronto Real Estate Board, in releasing the monthly statistics Wednesday.

"Some buyers pulled forward their decision to purchase, which has impacted sales levels in the second half of 2012."

Once again, TREB attributed tougher mortgage-lending rules — especially the capping of amortizations at 25 years instead of 30 years — and the City of Toronto's land transfer tax for pushing many buyers to the sidelines.

But also impacting average price growth has been a shift away from pricier homes, says TREB.

The number of detached homes that changed hands this November compared with November 2011 was down 13 per cent across the GTA — a drop in sales of 18.5 per cent in Toronto and 10.6 per cent in the 905 regions.

Prices for detached homes were down almost four per cent in Toronto, but up 3.5 per cent in the 905 regions, according to the TREB figures, and averaged $741,480 and $556,745 respectively.

Semi-detached homes saw an 11 per cent drop in sales, especially in Toronto. But prices held up better in that market segment than all others, with prices up 5.8 per cent in the 905 regions to average $392,067, and 3.8 per cent in Toronto to an average price of $583,117 in November. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The condominium building at 96 St. Patrick St. in Toronto, the city which had the biggest decline in condo prices. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Veterans care

Ombudsman to oversee audit at Sunnybrook

Amid allegations it has been providing substandard care to its most frail residents, Canada's largest veterans facility will undergo a provincial audit in addition to one previously announced by the federal government.

Meanwhile, Canada's veterans ombudsman announced Wednesday that he would formally observe the audit of Sunnybrook Veterans Centre.

"Recent allegations regarding the treatment of veterans at Sunnybrook hospital are of great concern to me," Guy Parent said in a release.

"I want to ensure that the audit to be carried out by Veterans Affairs Canada is as thorough as necessary to fully identify and address issues of concern."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Community gets new indoor sports facility

Monarch Park Collegiate principal Cynthia Abernethy, left, Matt Raizenne of Razor Management Inc. and TDSB trustee Cathy Dandy cut the ribbon for the official opening of Monarch Park Stadium, a joint venture between the TDSB and Razor Management. The facility will be shared, providing an indoor sports facility during school hours and rented out after school hours. CHRIS SO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Health cuts. Group says Ontario hospitals are closing beds and clinics

A patients' advocacy group says Ontario hospitals are being forced to close beds, shut clinics and cut services that cannot be replaced by community-based agencies.

The Ontario Health Coalition says a zero per cent budget increase for hospitals has forced service cuts across the province, with some out-patient clinics — for everything from physiotherapy to pain management — being closed.

Coalition director Natalie Mehra says the government is misleading people when it claims the services being cut by hospitals are being replaced with home care and more community-based care.

Mehra calls it smoke and mirrors for the government to claim it's all trade-offs and there are no real cuts happening.

She adds that some patients are forced to pay $50 to $70 for every physiotherapy treatment when hospital clinics close and they are sent to private facilities.

Mehra also says Ontario's health-care funding is the lowest per person in Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Home care not a solution

- The coalition says a recent increase in funding for home care is nowhere near enough to deal with lengthy waiting lists.
- It also says per-client funding is actually decreasing because "there are so many more patients being dumped into home care."

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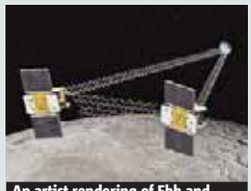
Gravity mapping

Moon's crust more battered, thinner than once thought

The moon took quite a beating in its early days, more than previously believed, scientists reported Wednesday.

This surprising new view of the moon comes from detailed gravity mapping by twin spacecraft, which slipped into orbit around the celestial body earlier this year.

Evidence of a highly-fractured lunar interior just below the surface suggests that other rocky planets, including Earth, would have suffered similar bombardment from space rocks early in their history.



An artist rendering of Ebb and Flow. NASA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Measurements by the NASA spacecraft called Ebb and Flow also found that the moon's crust is much thinner than believed — only about 40 kilometres thick.

Though past missions have measured lunar gravity — about one-sixth of Earth's pull — Ebb and Flow are the first spacecraft dedicated to this pursuit.

To collect data, the washing machine-size spacecraft flew in formation, orbiting about 56 kilometres above the moon's surface. Their positions allowed them to peer deep into the moon.

The spacecraft also managed to see landforms on the moon in greater detail than before, including volcanoes, basins and craters.

The mission is scheduled to end later this month when Ebb and Flow crash into the moon.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Astronaut faces year on space station

An American first. Mission intended as a test for trip to Mars

NASA astronaut Scott Kelly

DAVID J. PHILLIP/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NASA astronaut Scott Kelly is already bracing for an unprecedented one-year mission aboard the International Space Station. He figures it will be as gruelling as climbing Mount Everest.

"It's fun when you're done with it, not while you're doing it," Kelly said Wednesday, barely a week after being named to the marathon flight along with Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko.

The mission, which is set to begin in 2015, is intended as a medical test bed for even longer Mars expeditions in the decades ahead.

Space station life can be routine, Kelly noted during a news conference.

"In the morning, you wake up, you're at work. When you go to sleep, you're also at work. So imagine being in your office for a whole year and you never get to leave," he said.

Dr. Igor Ushakov, director of the Institute for Biological Problems in Moscow, warned that the medical risks of zero gravity will be at least double what they are on the more typical six-month mission.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Endurance record

Kelly will set a U.S. space endurance record with this mission. No American has spent more than seven months in space at a time.

- **Russia,** however, can boast four cosmonauts with at least one uninterrupted year in space.
- **The world record** is held by Dr. Valery Polyakov at 14 months.

A star-spangled landscape

In this NASA image, the United States and part of Canada is seen at night via composite data acquired by the new Suomi NPP satellite in April and October. The image was made possible by technology that can observe dim signals such as city lights, gas flares, auroras and wildfires. NASA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Set adrift. NASA today seems lost in space: Report

NASA doesn't have a clear sense of where it is going, an independent panel of science and engineering experts said in a stinging report Wednesday.

The space shuttles are now museum pieces. Few people are paying attention to the International Space Station, and American astronauts have to rely on Russian spaceships to get there and back. Meanwhile, rocket-building is being outsourced to private companies and a commercial venture plans to send people to the moon by the end of the decade.

The report by a panel of the distinguished National Academy of Sciences doesn't blame the space agency, it faults the president, Congress and the nation for not giving NASA better direction.

Academy panel member Bob Crippen, a retired NASA manager and astronaut who piloted the first space shuttle mission, said he has never seen the space agency so adrift.

NASA spokesman David Weaver defended the agency, saying in an emailed statement that it has clear and challenging goals. He listed several projects, including continued use of the International Space Station and efforts to develop a heavy-duty rocket and crew capsule capable of taking astronauts into deep space.

John Logsdon, a space policy expert who advised the Obama campaign in 2008, said the panel's report, which is more strongly worded than usual for the academy, "rather fairly points its fingers at the White House."

"There's a general sense of disappointment that the administration has not been more bold and visionary in setting out a path for the program," said Logsdon, who was not on the panel.

President Barack Obama told the space agency in 2010 to plan to send astronauts to an asteroid by 2025 as a training ground for an eventual Mars landing. But the 80-page panel report and its authors said there is little support for that idea within NASA and the international space community.

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Driver's ed. Stray dogs taught how to drive will show off skills on live TV

It was about three weeks into the dogs' five weeks of training when Mark Vette knew he could teach them to drive a car.

The animal trainer and his team, whose film credits include The Chronicles of Narnia, are confident that rescue dogs Monty, Ginger and Porter will be able to pilot a modified Mini Countryman about 100 metres on their own.

Showtime is Monday evening, New Zealand time, on live television.

They've been trained as part of a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals campaign to prove that stray dogs are, in Vette's words, "just as smart as the $1,500 dogs pumped out from puppy mills that are badly bred."

Monty, dumped at the SPCA by his owners, had behavioural problems. Porter was found wandering the streets of Auckland. Ginny had been seized by authorities when she was discovered, emaciated and terrified, locked in a bathroom.

"I certainly did have my worries," Vette, who is an animal psychologist as well as a trainer, told Torstar News Service.

The worries started early. Two of the dogs had to get over car sickness.

Road test

All three dogs will take turns at the wheel of a modified Mini.

- **Changing perspectives.** "In New Zealand, too many people write off shelter animals as second-rate mutts and mongrels. Our challenge was to change that," Draft FCB executive creative director Regan Grafton said by email.

"We built a rig that is a mock-up of the car. Once we got them learning all the bits and pieces, 20-odd behaviours, then we had to chain them all together. The dogs got to retain a lot of behaviours."

Ginny, a one-year-old Bearded Collie Whippet cross, became ill and fell behind in the training but "she's come screaming back into contention," said Vette.

Monty, an 18-month Giant Schnauzer, and Porter, a 10-month Bearded Collie cross, "have proven they're pretty bloody good."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The SPCA has developed a doggie driver's ed program to prove that stray dogs can be trained just as well as purebreds. SCREENSHOT

Struggling through snowy Stockholm

People struggle against the wind and drifting snow in Stockholm Wednesday. Forecasters have issued a Class 2 storm warning for central and southern Sweden, saying that Stockholm may face up to 30 centimetres of snow. Traffic was also hit hard, with Sweden's main airport coming more or less to a standstill Wednesday, delaying the anticipated arrival of some of this year's Nobel Prize laureates. Wednesday was the planned arrival date for most of this year's laureates, who will participate in several activities before they pick up their prizes at a ceremony in Stockholm on Dec. 10. ANDERS WIKLUND/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rich, developing nations spar over climate change

Pollution. While the UN says rich countries are mostly to blame, the U.S. and the EU point out China is now the world's top carbon polluter

Rich countries are to blame for climate change and should take the lead in forging a global climate pact by 2015, a deadline that "must be met," the head of the United Nations said Wednesday.

On the sidelines of international climate talks in Qatar, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said it was "only fair and reasonable that the developed world should bear most of the responsibility" in fighting the gradual warming of the planet.

Ban's comments echoed the concerns of China and other developing countries, which say rich nations have a historical responsibility for global warming because their factories released carbon emissions into the atmosphere long before the climate effects were known.

"The climate change phenomenon has been caused by the industrialization of the developed world," Ban said.

Many rich nations including the U.S. and European Union say the firewall between developed and developing countries that has guided the two-decade-old climate process in the past no longer reflects the world today and isn't helpful in dealing with the problem.

Most of the emissions now come from the developing world, and China has overtaken the U.S. to become the world's top carbon polluter.

How to divide the burden of emissions cuts is at the core of discussions to create a new global climate treaty that would apply to all nations. The only binding pact so far, the Kyoto Protocol, only covers the emissions of industrialized countries.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Drawing a line. Israel settlement plan not helpful to peace: Baird

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird says Israel's plan to build new settlements on territory claimed by the Palestinians is not helping the cause of peace in the Middle East.

Baird made his first public statement in the House of Commons on Wednesday on the controversial move by the Israelis, which was meant as retaliation after the Palestinians won greater recognition at the United Nations last week.

The Israeli settlement announcement sparked international condemnation from all of Canada's allies, including the United States, which voted against the Palestinian motion at the UN.

The Harper government has been criticized for staying virtually silent on the Israeli move, beyond a generic statement that unilateral moves by either side were not good for the prospects of peace.

Baird reiterated the government's heavy criticism of the Palestinian statehood bid during question period when he was asked about the settlements by the Bloc Quebecois.

But he emphasized that neither the UN vote nor the settlement announcement is helpful.

"We have been a strong supporter of economic development and security relations in the West Bank through our humanitarian and foreign aid developments, with respect to the Palestinian Authority," said Baird.

"However, the PA's action and provocative rhetoric at the United Nations would obviously elicit a response from Israel. Neither is helpful to advance the cause of peace and we do not support either."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Halting peace

"Even Israel's allies are denouncing this renewed colonization"

Bloc Quebecois MP Jean-Francois Fortin, who called for "a more balanced" position.

Caught in the crossfire

Syrian civil war causing Lebanese casualties

The families of Lebanese men killed in Syria last week say their relatives were more interested in nice clothes and vacations than fighting a civil war. Yet Syrian President Bashar Assad's regime branded them foreign jihadists — and their deaths set off three days of new spillover violence.

Gunmen loyal to opposite sides battled Wednesday in Tripoli. The fighting has killed six people and wounded nearly 60 since Monday, security officials said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Several dead, injured

Earthquake shakes rural Iran

A moderate earthquake shook eastern Iran Wednesday, killing at least five people and injuring several others, Iranian TV reported.

State TV said the 5.5-magnitude quake hit South Khorasan province in eastern Iran near the border with Afghanistan at 12:08 p.m. (EST) Wednesday.

The broadcast quoted Javad Heravi, who represents the region in the Iranian parliament, as saying that the quake caused damage to rural buildings and cut power lines and telephone communication.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Residents cross a river using suspended ropes at Andap, New Bataan township, Compostela Valley in southern Philippines Wednesday; a day after Typhoon Bopha made landfall. Typhoon Bopha, one of the strongest typhoons to hit the Philippines this year, barrelled across the country's south on Tuesday, killing scores of people while triggering landslides, flooding and cutting off power in two entire provinces. BULLIT MARQUEZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Powerful typhoon ravages Philippines

Hundreds dead, missing. Red Cross issues urgent appeal for $4.8 million to help people directly affected

Stunned parents searching for missing children examined a row of mud-stained bodies covered with banana leaves while survivors dried their soaked belongings on roadsides Wednesday, a day after a powerful typhoon killed nearly 300 people in the southern Philippines.

Officials fear more bodies may be found as rescuers reach hard-hit areas that were isolated by landslides, floods and downed communications.

At least 151 people died in the worst-hit province of Compostela Valley when Typhoon Bopha lashed the region Tuesday, including 78 villagers and soldiers who perished in a flash flood that swamped two emergency shelters and a military camp, provincial spokeswoman Fe Maestre said.

Disaster-response agencies reported 284 dead in the region and 14 fatalities elsewhere from the typhoon, one of the strongest to hit the country this year.

About 80 people survived the deluge in New Bataan with injuries and Interior Secretary Mar Roxas, who visited the town, said 319 others remained missing.

The farming town of 45,000 people was a muddy wasteland of collapsed houses and coconut and banana trees felled by Bopha's ferocious winds.

Bodies of victims were laid on the ground for viewing by people searching for missing relatives. Some were badly mangled after being dragged by raging flood waters over rocks and other debris. A man sprayed insecticide on the remains to keep away swarms of flies.

The deaths came despite efforts by President Benigno Aquino III's government to force residents out of high-risk communities as the typhoon approached.

Some 20 typhoons and storms lash the Philippines each year, but few hit the southern Mindanao region.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washed away

"These were whole families among the registered missing. ... Entire families may have been washed away."

New Bataan Interior Secretary Mar Roxas

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How's Kate doing? Cheeky Aussie DJs fool U.K. hospital

Prank call. Radio pair from Down Under mimic royal accents and hear the pregnant duchess 'hasn't had any retching'

The hospital fell for it — royally.

Two Australian radio disc jockeys apologized Wednesday after impersonating Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles in a prank call that got a London hospital to tell them all about Kate Middleton's condition.

The 30-year-old Duchess of Cambridge is pregnant and is being treated at the King Edward VII hospital in London for severe morning sickness.

A woman using the often-mimicked voice of Britain's monarch asked after the duchess' health — and was told by a nurse that Kate "hasn't had any retching with me and she's been sleeping on and off.''

Pippa and James Middleton leave the London hospital after visiting their sister, Kate.

DAN KITWOOD/GETTY IMAGES

"She's sleeping at the moment and she has had an uneventful night.

"She's been given some fluids. She's stable at the moment," the kindly nurse informed the supposed queen and prince on the station's recording.

A dog yaps in the background while the alleged queen and prince talk about travelling to the hospital to check in on the patient.

"I would suggest that any time after nine o'clock will be suitable to visit,'' the nurse said. "We'll be getting her freshened up.''

Australian radio personalities Mel Greig and Michael Christian of 2DayFM later apologized for the hoax — along with their station.

"We were very surprised that our call was put through. We thought we'd be hung up on as soon as they heard our terrible accents," they said in a joint statement with the station.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Her dad never came home ...

Even a tot can pay tribute. Five-month-old Lexie May Wade wears the medals of her father, Private Daniel Wade, who was killed in Afghanistan. The occasion was a homecoming parade. Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion Yorkshire Regiment marched through the City of York in England before attending a thanksgiving and remembrance service at York Minster. The soldiers lost seven comrades in Afghanistan.

CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY IMAGES

Bulldozing error

Hey, where's our lovely chateau?

Residents of a sleepy French village in Bordeaux have been left dumbfounded after discovering their local 18th-century chateau was completely bulldozed "by mistake."

The mayor's office in Yvrac said Wednesday that workers hired to renovate the grand 140,000-square-foot manor and raze a small building on the same estate in southwest France mixed them up.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Puerto Rico's test

Can Twitter keep you out of jail?

Puerto Rico has turned to Twitter in an experimental effort to help reduce the number of violent crimes.

Officials are allowing three male prison inmates to use a Twitter account and share their experiences of being in jail. The pilot program is dubbed Follow Me so you Don't Follow Me.

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Egypt descends into turmoil

Cairo. Protests turn violent over President Mohammed Morsi's new constitution

Egypt descended into political turmoil on Wednesday over the constitution drafted by Islamist allies of President Mohammed Morsi, and at least 211 people were wounded as supporters and opponents battled each other with firebombs, rocks and sticks outside the presidential palace.

Four more presidential aides resigned in protest over Morsi's handling of the crisis, and a key opponent of the Islamist president likened Morsi's rule to that of ousted authoritarian leader Hosni Mubarak.

Both sides were digging in for a long struggle, with the opposition vowing more protests and rejecting any dialogue unless the charter is rescinded, and Morsi pressing relentlessly forward with plans for a Dec. 15 constitutional referendum.

"The solution is to go to the ballot box," declared Mahmoud Ghozlan, a spokesman for Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood, asserting the charter was "the best constitution Egypt ever had."

The clashes outside the presidential palace in Cairo's Heliopolis district marked an escalation in the deepening crisis. It was the first time supporters of rival camps fought each other since last year's anti-Mubarak uprising.

The large scale and intensity of the fighting marked a milestone in Egypt's rapidly entrenched schism, pitting Morsi's Brotherhood and ultra-conservative Islamists in one camp and liberals, leftists and Christians in the other.

The violence spread to other parts of the country later Wednesday. Anti-Morsi protesters stormed and set ablaze the Brotherhood offices in Suez and Ismailia, east of Cairo, and there were clashes in the industrial city of Mahallah and the province of Menoufiyah in the Nile Delta north of the capital.

Compounding Morsi's woes, four of his advisers resigned, joining two other members of his 17-member advisory panel who have abandoned him since the crisis began.

Mohamed ElBaradei, a leading opposition reform advocate, said Morsi's rule was "no different" than Mubarak's.

"In fact, it is perhaps even worse," the Nobel Peace Prize laureate told a news conference after he accused the president's supporters of a "vicious and deliberate" attack on peaceful demonstrators outside the palace.

The opposition is demanding that Morsi rescind the decrees giving him nearly unrestricted powers and shelve the controversial draft constitution the president's Islamist allies rushed through last week.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Mohammed Morsi's supporters clash with opponents outside Cairo's presidential palace on Wednesday. HASSAN AMMAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I voted for Morsi to get rid of Hosni Mubarak. I now regret it."

Nadia el-Shafie, a protester of the Morsi regime, yells at Muslim Brotherhood supporters on a side street in Cairo.

Congo rebels planning talks with government

Congo's M23 rebels are sending a delegation to Kampala, Uganda, to negotiate with the Congolese government on Thursday, the rebels' president said.

"Our delegation will drive to Kampala for talks," M23 president Jean-Marie Runiga told The Associated Press Wednesday.

Runiga said the talks with representatives of President Joseph Kabila's Kinshasa government must be wide-ranging negotiations to cover constitutional and governance issues and should include the Congolese opposition and civic organizations.

Congolese M23 rebel president Jean Marie Runiga. JEROME DELAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The prospect of negotiations in neighbouring Uganda comes as the strategic eastern Congo city of Goma, with one million people, struggles to return to normal life.

Goma was held for two weeks by the M23 rebels, who now remain just three kilometres away in the hills above the city. Although many shops in Goma have reopened, most banks have remained closed, paralyzing the city's business.

The rebels say they are fighting for better governance and democracy in Congo. But the real reason for their rebellion is Rwanda's desire to annex the mineral-rich mountains of eastern Congo, according to a recently published report by a U.N. group of experts.

Despite the uncertainty, the U.N. peacekeeping force is working with the Congolese government to get Goma back to normal life.

In recent weeks, the enormous, jungle-covered nation of Congo, whose capital is about 1,600 kilometres away from Goma, inched closer to war with its smaller, but more developed neighbour, Rwanda, which is accused of sending soldiers and arms to the M23.

Congo's Interior Minister Richard Muyej, speaking to reporters in Goma, said that they are working hard to fill the power vacuum that was left by the rebels' departure.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Negotiations

The Rwanda-backed rebels have threatened to retake Goma unless talks begin.

- Despite their retreat, the government has not yet OK'd negotiations.
- A government spokesman said President Joseph Kinshasa would listen to their grievances and respond.

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Callous or cowed? No one tried to save man on tracks

Subway horror in N.Y.C. Did 'bystander effect' stop crowd from rushing to help man who was pushed to his death?

MICHELLE CASTILLO
Metro World News in London, U.K.

The ugly question is: Why?

Why did no one on a crowded subway platform in New York City help Ki-Suck Han when he was shoved onto the tracks to his death?

Blame it on the "bystander effect," a psychologist told Metro World News.

Or to put it another way, a "diffusion of responsibility" actually occurs, said Dr. Scott Bea of the Cleveland Clinic Main Campus in Cleveland, Ohio.

Another psychologist, Dr. Elizabeth Waterman, said the more people who see an event like this happen, the less likely they are to help a stranger.

Ki-Suck Han's widow, Serim Han, holds a picture of him at a New York news conference Wednesday. She's reported as saying they had an argument before the tragedy. She tried to phone him later, but he never picked up.
BEBETO MATTHEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"The pressure for people to take responsibility is diffused among the group of others, therefore, the individuals feel less pressure to help," said Waterman of Morningside Recovery Centers in Newport Beach, Calif.

Ki-Suck Han died on the tracks at the Times Square subway station.

A gruesome newspaper photo shows a solitary, tiny figure helplessly clawing at the platform as a Q train looms in the distance.

The New York Post ran the image on its cover, outraging many citizens.

Photographer R. Umar Abbasi defended himself Wednesday, saying he used his flash hoping the subway driver would see it and stop.

The suspect

A homeless man, 30-year-old Naeem Davis, was arrested Wednesday in the subway pushing death of Ki-Suck Han.

- **The video.** Security video showed a man fitting the suspect's description working with street vendors near Rockefeller Center, police said.
- **The charge.** Davis is in custody, facing a second-degree murder charge.

"The perp was running toward me. I was afraid he might push me onto the tracks," he wrote in the Post.

Bea said: "I would hypothesize that the photographer is trying to … rationalize his own behaviour ...

"The public will have a strong tendency to judge those who were present negatively without understanding the powerful nature of 'the bystander effect.'"

Vital questions. Expert tells of likely turmoil in the minds of onlookers

Psychologist Dr. Elizabeth Waterman told Metro World News what could have gone on inside the minds of the bystanders caught up in the New York City subway tragedy.

Q: The photographer claims there was 22 seconds between when the man fell and when he was crushed. Would there be any reason why people wouldn't step forward to help him within the "short" period of time?

A: They were possibly in shock and trying to process the events taking place. Also, the "bystander effect" likely played a role.

Q: The photographer is being faulted for not helping out and it looks like he is taking the brunt of the blame. What could he specifically be going through psychologically?

A: It seems as if he was trying to help the individual based on his explanation. However, I cannot say for sure. He may have acted on instinct and done what came automatically to him in the name of helping the individual.

Dr. Elizabeth Waterman says the crowd was possibly in shock.
CONTRIBUTED

Q: The photographer claims he took pictures in rapid succession so the flash would warn the train to stop, and he claims he feels he did his part and there were other people closer. Is this a common response (to blame other people for not helping)? Is it a defence mechanism?

A: Yes, people are likely to blame others when tragedy occurs and it can be a way to reduce personal feelings of guilt.

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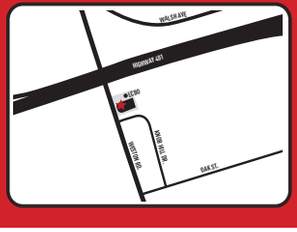

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Manhunt. Authorities searching for 45 illegals smuggled into Canada

The hunt is on for 45 Romanian nationals smuggled into Canada.

Government officials said Wednesday the missing are among 85 people who entered the country illegally at intervals since February.

Authorities have rounded up 40 of them so far, and 30 of these were detained under new immigration law provisions that saw the entire group designated as part of an "irregular arrival," or human smuggling operation.

"We open our arms to true immigrants and true refugees who follow the rules," Immigration Minister Jason Kenney said at a news conference in Stanstead, Que., a border town that may have been the group's entry point. "We will not tolerate those who are abusing our generosity." THE CANADIAN PRESS

The way in

The first of five waves of Romanian nationals began arriving in February, officials said Wednesday.

- The smuggling ring saw people travel to Mexico, cross illegally into the U.S., drive north to the border and sneak into Quebec.

Tuition battle

Student protester receives sentence

Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, a Quebec protester found guilty of encouraging students to violate legal injunctions, has received 120 hours of community service. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sex-selection motion risks reopening abortion debate

Old wounds. Tory MP fears new technology may lead to abortion of female fetuses

If Canadians thought the last House of Commons debate around abortion was contentious, the next one is shaping up to be even more complicated and potentially a closer vote.

B.C. Conservative MP Mark Warawa is promoting a private member's motion that calls on the Commons to condemn the practice of sex selection. Sex selection occurs when a woman aborts a fetus — usually a female one — after determining the gender through an ultrasound.

Warawa said Wednesday his motion is about discrimination against women, rather than reproductive rights. It is not likely to come up for debate until March.

The father of two girls said he was compelled to act after watching a CBC investigative story last June. He doesn't have numbers on the prevalence in Canada.

"I think parliamentarians are faced with two choices: We either condemn this form of discrimination against women and girls or we endorse it," Warawa said, accompanied by 11 Tory colleagues.

Conservative MP Stella Ambler hugs Mark Warawa on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Wednesday after he spoke about Motion 408, the anti-discrimination motion against sex selection. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Although Warawa and his supporters would not concede a connection between the motion and the wider debate over restricting abortions, the Prime Minister's Office is doing just that.

"The government is opposed to opening this debate. Parliament has already voted on this issue," spokesman Carl Vallee said.

Despite Harper's unequivocal stand on the issue, Conservative MPs present a constant stream of petitions to limit abortion rights or change legislation. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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23 items linked to suspended lab cleared

Health Canada. Companies asked to halt sales of products tested by Chemi until their safety can be confirmed

A day after revoking the licence of a Toronto-area chemical testing lab following the discovery of falsified test results, Health Canada says the number of possibly affected products is less than initially believed.

Paul Glover of the department's Health Products and Food Branch said Wednesday the number of products it is "concerned about" at Chemi Pharmaceutical Inc. has dropped by 23 since Tuesday.

Retesting

Health Canada initially said it had uncovered 53 products that needed to be retested and was waiting to hear from manufacturers about another 25 products, which may also need to be re-analyzed.

The agency announced Tuesday it had yanked the lab's licence, saying it found falsified results in tests involving a "wide range of products," including medications and natural food products.

It alleges that bogus results were provided to companies that had contracted Chemi's services.

Chemi says records were falsified not by the company, but by a recently fired employee at the Mississauga, Ont., lab.

Appearing on CTV's Canada AM early Wednesday, Glover said the list has been whittled down "through the co-operation of the companies" whose products were involved.

"They've either had other tests done or had other testing done in the interim and that gave us assurance that these products are safe and we're able to remove them from the list," he said.

A list posted on Health Canada's website has been updated to reflect the changes.

The agency has said there is no evidence that the health of Canadians has been compromised.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Charity begins with Gangnam Style

Volunteer workers, dressed in Santa Claus costumes, perform South Korean rapper PSY's Gangnam Style dance during a visit to give Christmas gifts to prematurely born babies in Seoul on Wednesday.

LEE JIN-MAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Words of the year: Capitalism and socialism

Thanks to the U.S. presidential election, socialism and capitalism are forever wed as Merriam-Webster's most looked-up words of 2012.

Traffic for the unlikely pair on the company's website about doubled this year from the year before as the health-care debate heated up and discussion intensified over "American capitalism" versus "European socialism," said the editor-at-large, Peter Sokolowski.

One-day wonder

"That's a bunch of malarkey."

U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden in a televised debate with Mitt Romney running mate Paul Ryan. Look-ups spiked 3,000 per cent, the largest in a single 24-hour period.

Democracy, globalization, marriage and bigot — all touched by politics — made the top 10, in no particular order. The latter two were driven in part by the fight for same-sex marriage acceptance.

Other words in Merriam-Webster's top 10 for 2012:

• Touche, thanks in part to Survivor contestant Kat Edorsson misusing the word to mean "tough luck" rather than point well made.

• Schadenfreude, meaning taking pleasure in the misery of others, was used broadly in the media after the election.

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Mother of 3 dead children faces murder charges

Sonia Blanchette arrives at the courthouse in Drummondville, Que. on Wednesday. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec. An unsteady and dazed Sonia Blanchette makes first court appearance.

The father of three dead children looked on impassively from the front row of a courtroom on Wednesday as their mother was charged with three counts of first-degree murder.

Sonia Blanchette appeared unsteady and dazed as she shuffled into the courtroom three days after the children were found dead.

When she arrived at the courthouse in the back of an unmarked police cruiser, Blanchette kept her head low and her hood up.

A court-appointed lawyer requested that she be evaluated to determine whether she is fit to face criminal charges.

Blanchette did not say a word during her arraignment and is scheduled to return to court on Dec. 14.

The children's father, Patrick Desautels, was surrounded by family as he took in the arraignment.

He did not say a word before entering or after leaving the courtroom.

The children's funeral will be held in Acton Vale on Saturday.

On Tuesday, Desautels said his family was in tremendous pain during a brief meeting with reporters.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The investigation

Police began questioning Blanchette after her release from hospital on Wednesday.

- Police have yet to confirm how Anais, 2, Loic, 4 and Laurelie, 5 died.
- The three children were found dead at their home in Drummondville on Sunday.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND MOBILITY HUB
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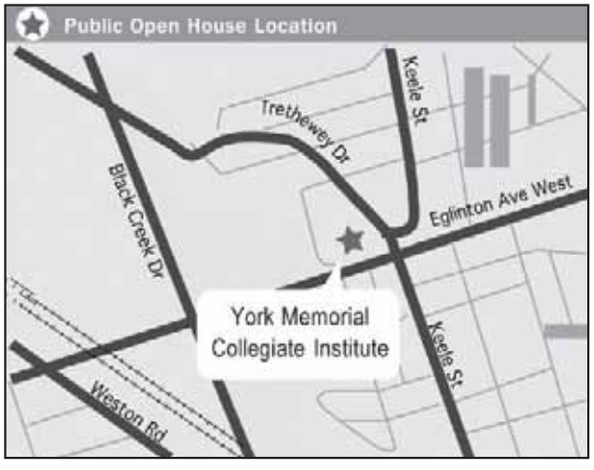
Metrolinx invites you to attend a public information meeting to learn more about:

- a change to the west light rail transit alignment that will enable an underground station at Weston Road and Mount Dennis, and
- the preliminary planning for a new vehicle maintenance and storage facility at Eglinton and Black Creek.



Metrolinx also invites you to provide input through a Mobility Hub Workshop that will help identify community opportunities to shape the future vision for the area.

The information meeting will be held starting at 6:30 p.m. with an opportunity to view displays and speak one-on-one with staff. The Mobility Hub Workshop will follow, beginning at 8:00 p.m. We look forward to seeing you there.

Date: Wednesday, December 12, 2012
Time: 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Location: York Memorial Collegiate Institute
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EGLINTON–SCARBOROUGH CROSSTOWN

South Africa. Life sentence for gunman in 2010 honeymoon killing

A South African judge sentenced the triggerman in the 2010 honeymoon slaying of a Swedish bride to life in prison Wednesday, calling the shooter "a merciless and evil person" who deserved the maximum punishment for his crime.

The sentencing of Xolile Mngeni for the killing of 28-year-old Anni Dewani comes as prosecutors still await word whether the newlywed's British husband, who they say orchestrated the November 2010 killing, will be extradited to South Africa to stand trial.

The bride's family, who attended the sentencing with a picture of her smiling pinned to their chests, said justice would only be done once husband Shrien Dewani stands before a South African court.

Judge Robert Henney, who found Mngeni guilty in November, did not hold back his contempt while sentencing the 25-year-old on Wednesday for the killing.

Henney said that the shooter showed no remorse and his longtime illnesses could not weigh against receiving the harshest penalty available by law.

Mngeni, who had surgery in June 2011 to remove a brain tumour, has suffered seizures and blackouts and has trouble remembering things, his lawyer has said.

In August, Mngeni's alleged accomplice Mziwamadoda Qwabe pleaded guilty to charges over the killing, receiving a 25-year prison sentence.

Zola Tongo, the taxi driver that police say husband Shrien Dewani asked to plot the killing, earlier received an 18-year prison sentence.

Both Tongo and Qwabe have said Dewani wanted it to look like he wasn't involved in his wife's slaying and they planned to have the attack look like a carjacking in Cape Town's impoverished Gugulethu township.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"Me and my wife have not slept a full night since Anni left us."

Murder victim Anni Dewani's father Vinod Hindocha reacts to the sentencing of gunman Xolile Mngeni.

Xolile Mngeni gives his family members a thumbs up after sentencing in a Cape Town court on Wednesday. SCHALK VAN ZUYDAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Car scam? U.S. regulators warn Canadians of non-existent dealership

American regulators have issued a warning about a car scam originating out of Oklahoma that appears to be targeting Canadians looking for great deals.

The warning is about Ambient Auto Centre, which has been advertising high-end, late model vehicles on several Canadian websites at prices well below normal.

The catch, according to Canadian and American regulators, is that Ambient doesn't appear to exist much beyond having an elaborate website.

"It's just a complete scam," John Cobb, an investigator with the Oklahoma Used Motor Vehicle and Parts Commission, said Wednesday.

"They're trying to get a victim on the hook to wire them the money for a vehicle."

The company promises to ship the vehicle, but Cobb said that won't happen and the buyer would simply be out of any money sent.

The Canadian sites on which Ambient advertises include Autotrader, Wheels, eBay, Craigslist, Kijiji and Autocatch.

'Ambient Auto Centre'

Consumer inquiries about Ambient began arriving at Oklahoma Used Motor Vehicle and Parts Commission in mid-October. When they couldn't find a licensed dealer in Oklahoma by that name, officials went to visit the dealership at the listed address. It turned out to be an empty field.

- Ambient's website boasts of the "largest selection of used luxury cars" but photographs of vehicles appear to have been ripped off from other car dealers, and customer testimonials appear to be fabricated, regulators said.

In an interview from Oklahoma City, Cobb said the scam appears to be aimed solely north of the U.S. border, and inquiries about Ambient have come in from across Canada. "You've got to do research, research, research," said Terry O'Keefe an industry spokesman.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hit stage musical Spamalot sued by movie producer

Pedestrians walk under the marquee of the Broadway show Monty Python's Spamalot at the Shubert Theatre in New York in this 2008 file photo. A producer of the film Monty Python and the Holy Grail is suing the comedy troupe over royalties from the hit stage musical Spamalot. Producer Mark Forstater wants a bigger share of proceeds from the show, which is based on the 1975 movie spoof of the legend of King Arthur.

CRAIG RUTTLE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Legal language update

Lunatic removed from U.S. laws

The word lunatic will be stricken from U.S. federal law under legislation that passed Wednesday and is headed to President Barack Obama for signature.

The congressional action is the latest effort to remove language from the U.S. code that has become outdated or demeaning. Two years ago Congress took out references in federal law to the term mental retardation.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Corruption inquiry

Star witness hit for unpaid taxes

A star witness at Quebec's corruption inquiry is having problems with the taxman in his new line of work. Lino Zambito told the probe during his testimony that he was forced to leave the construction industry due to a financial strain. Revenue Quebec announced Wednesday that it had seized $38,465 and equipment from his pizzeria because of unpaid tax. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Border apology. Worker threatened to cut Toronto woman's resident card

In a rare move, the Canada Border Services Agency has apologized to a Toronto woman who complained that a border guard threw her permanent-resident card on the floor and threatened to cut it with scissors.

"I would like to offer you my sincere apology that the actions of one of our employees were so distressing to you," wrote Jeff Walters, acting director of port-of-entry operations at Fort Erie, in a letter dated Nov. 23.

"I assure you that the behaviour you have described is not condoned under the CBSA code of conduct." While the border agency said "appropriate administrative action" would be taken to ensure the officer is aware of the need to remain professional at all times when interacting with the public, it has refused to reveal the identity of the subject officer or the disciplinary action being taken.

At around 3:30 a.m. on Oct. 24, Liu Yazhen, 60, arrived at the Peace Bridge port of entry on a Megabus coach bus after spending about a week visiting her son and friends in New York City, said the woman's daughter, Karen Chen.

A male officer checked her permanent resident card — a travel document all landed immigrants must carry to get back to the country — and asked some questions. However, Liu answered, "No English," according to her daughter, who moved here from Fuzhou, China, in 2000.

"The officer then threw the PR card to the floor. After that, he went into a room and back, and brought a pair of scissors and showed to my mother he wanted to cut the PR card, but he didn't cut it and let her go," recalled Chen. "They didn't explain why he did it. The officer owes my mother an apology."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

What could happen

• **Action?** Should a complaint be deemed valid, the agency could overturn an enforcement action to return a fine or goods seized, review and revise policies, seek legislative clarification/revisions or take disciplinary action against the subject of the complaint that can range from a written reprimand to termination.

Devastated by flames

Ruth Nicolaci, left, hugs her son and firefighter Lt. G. Bourne Knowles for the first time since learning that the landscaping business that she started with Knowles' father had been destroyed by fire in Fairhaven, Mass. Knowles, a volunteer firefighter, was among those who fought the four-alarm fire at the landscaping business.

PETER PEREIRA/THE STANDARD-TIMES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Compliance jeopardized

Conservatives shelve gun rule

The Conservative government has quietly shelved rules on serial numbers for guns that would have helped keep Canada in compliance with its international conventions on arms smuggling.

The decision came through an order-in-council — a cabinet decree — that was not formally announced by the Harper government but has been posted among dozens of other orders on the Privy Council Office website.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Brazil

Officer convicted of killing judge

A police officer — Cpl. Sergio Costa Junior of the Sao Goncalo department of Rio state police — will serve 21 years in prison after confessing to joining fellow officers in murdering Rio de Janeiro judge Patricia Acioli who dared take on the state's criminal militias, a court ruled.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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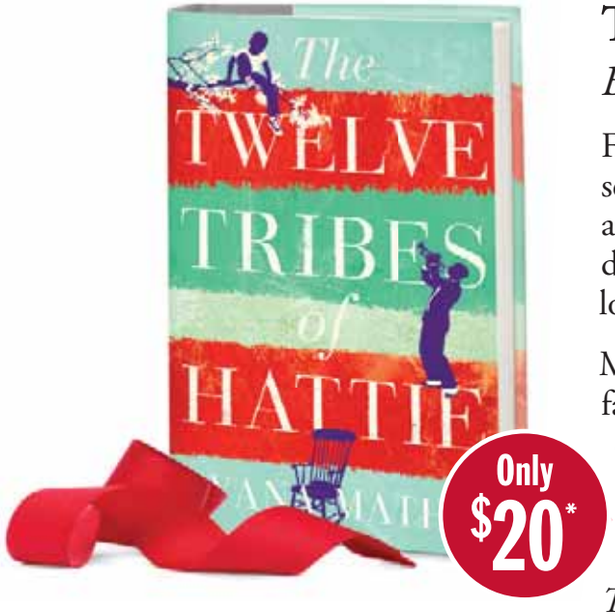

The Twelve Tribes of Hattie

By Ayana Mathis

From its devastating first chapter to its perfect last sentence, *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* never ceases to astonish. Ayana Mathis' first novel is one of the strongest debuts of 2012, and will be talked about, shared and loved for years to come.

Mathis tells the story of Hattie Shepherd as she and her family navigate, negotiate, and survive the twentieth century. Each chapter moves from child to child, and through them Mathis paints a portrait of a mother who has sacrificed everything, not for her children's happiness, but for their mere existence. *The Twelve Tribes of Hattie* is an accomplishment in that even while Mathis shows us the depths of selfishness, cruelty, and betrayal, she finds moments to let a ray of light shine through dirty windows. She allows her characters to be real – infuriatingly and often tragically real – but so real that you'll be frustrated at their failings and joyful at their moments of quiet optimism.

The Twelve Tribes of Hattie is a book that will live with you long after the last page. It is a book that showcases the talent of a powerful new voice in fiction, and it is certainly a book that deserves to be on everyone's list this holiday.

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Quebec. Parti Québécois hoping to force through broader language laws

Proposed new language laws in Quebec would have citizen snitches and a public list of shame for businesses that can't or won't provide services for customers and employees in French.

Hampered by its minority status in the province's national assembly, the Parti Québécois has eliminated many of the most controversial measures from its summer campaign platform to boost the use of French, including a ban on francophone students attending English colleges.

But legislation introduced Wednesday would still extend language laws to businesses with 26 or more employees. French-first laws, known as Bill 101, currently only apply to large companies.

"This is realpolitik," said Premier Pauline Marois. "We hope that this bill will be adopted."

The government plans to launch a website where it will publicly identify companies who don't fall in line in the hope that they will be shamed into compliance.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quebec Premier Pauline Marois
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Complaints

What would the legislation mean?

- **Language.** The legislation would make it easier for Quebecer customers and employees to file a complaint against businesses that run afoul of the revised Charter of the French Language.

Investors jump on board as CP Rail unveils big job cuts

Investors are welcoming a new plan by Canadian Pacific Railway Ltd. to drive down costs, while a union representing 5,000 of its employees is awaiting more details on major job cuts. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Economic impact. Shares closed up about 4 per cent to $96.82 on the Toronto Stock Exchange, marking a new 52-week high

Shares in CP Rail hit a new high Wednesday, as investors jumped on the once-lagging railroad after it announced steep job cuts as part of a turnaround strategy.

Chief executive officer Hunter Harrison, who took CP's helm in June, is making drastic changes that include eliminating nearly one-quarter of its 19,500 workforce that includes employees and contractors by 2016.

Harrison told analysts during meetings with investors in New York on Wednesday that with the 4,500 jobs targeted, the company will focus on natural attrition, not filling jobs when people quit or retire.

The company did not give any regional breakdown, so it is unknown how many jobs could be affected in the Toronto area.

The cuts will happen quickly with 1,700 jobs gone by year's end, and another 600 in the first quarter of next year.

CP has as many as 1,000 contractors, mostly in the information technology department, and it will look to keep only a small number, for a short time.

The job cuts announcement comes as Harrison is changing CP's operations, from closing yards and terminals to putting up the For Sale on surplus real estate and small rail line in the U.S. Midwest. He also getting rid of capital equipment, cutting the number of locomotives, which means fewer crews will be needed.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

By the numbers

3,000

By the end of 2013, chief executive officer Hunter Harrison estimates as many as 3,000 full-time jobs will be eliminated.

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Ways to lower car insurance rates at any age

Drivers should look for more savings regardless of driver profile.

Auto insurance is a major expense in a household budget. While it's mandatory to have insurance, overpaying is not necessary. There are simple ways of getting a more affordable auto insurance rate, regardless of age or driving experience.

NEW DRIVERS
Use of a 'good student discount' is one way to save on insurance for a young driver. Many insurance companies offer a discount for students who carry a minimum required grade average. Another way to save is by taking a driver education course from an approved school; to learn the rules of the road. Be sure to inquire about these options, as they may not always be advertised.

DRIVERS OVER 25
There may have been some improvement in yearly premiums for drivers with some driving experience. Don't forget to also ask about further discounts. These may include: installing a security system, driving an eco-friendly car, or installing safety features such as winter tires. If recently married, combine policies with your spouse and take advantage of bulk discounting by having more than one car insured with the company.

EXPERIENCED DRIVERS
An experienced driver with a good driving record may be eligible for better insurance rates; the key is to find the insurance company that will offer the lowest rate. Shopping around for car insurance is the easiest way to find a better way. Other ways to save include changing your deductible – perhaps carrying a higher deductible; or, combining home and auto insurance policies with the same insurance company.

DRIVERS OVER 55 YEARS
Mature drivers over 55 years old may qualify for some of the best rates available. Some insurance companies across Canada specialize in getting the best rates for mature drivers. There are also retirement benefits to keep in mind: no commute distance may mean a lower rate. Make sure the insurance company changes the commuting status to pleasure use.

No matter how old you are, it is always a good idea to shop around for a better rate. Quoting sites like **ComparaSave.com** help drivers find the lowest insurance rate available within their network of over 30 insurance companies.

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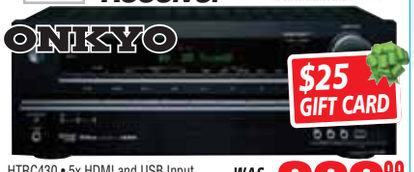

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EU slams screen producers with $1.9B cartel fine

Brussels. 'There are victims: Millions and millions of citizens,' says EU antitrust chief

The European Union on Wednesday imposed its biggest ever cartel fine of about $1.9 billion on seven companies for fixing the market of television and computer monitor tubes.

The EU's Commission ruled that, for a decade ending in 2006, the companies — including Philips, LG Electronics and Panasonic — artificially set prices, shared markets and restricted their output at the expense of millions of consumers.

EU antitrust commissioner Joaquin Almunia said that the companies' actions "feature all the worst kinds of anticompetitive behaviour that are strictly forbidden to companies doing business in Europe."

European commissioner for competition Joaquin Almunia speaks in Brussels Wednesday, after the EU issued the largest cartel fine in its history. YVES LOGGHE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tubes were the essential part of television screens and computer monitors before they were replaced by LCD and plasma flatscreens. The cathode ray tubes accounted for up to 70 per cent of the cost of a screen, the Commission said.

Alumina added that the tubes' cost gave "an indication of the serious harm" the companies had caused. "There are victims: Millions and millions of citizens."

Philips and LG Electronics, which acted jointly and separately, were fined a combined $1.3 billion with Panasonic punished with a $203 million fine, adding up to more if combined fines and affiliates were included.

Despite its co-operation with the Commission probe, Philips said in a statement it planned to appeal the fine since it considered it "disproportionate and unjust."

Other companies fined were Samsung SDI, Technicolor, MTPD and Toshiba. Chunghwa of Taiwan escaped fines as it was the first to reveal the cartel to the EU. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CRTC takes on Oprah

Oprah Winfrey appears at an interview with Late Show host David Letterman at his alma mater, Ball State University, in Muncie, Ind., on Nov. 26. Canada's federal broadcast regulator is taking on the television queen with a hearing next Tuesday into whether her Canadian network's programming fits the channel's educational mandate. Corus Entertainment Inc., which holds the licence for Oprah Winfrey Network in this country, said that nothing in the channel's licensing requirements prevents educational content from being "entertaining and engaging." MICHAEL CONROY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Real estate

Group launches takeover bid for mall owner

A consortium led by King-Sett Capital and including the Ontario Pension Board has launched a $4.4-billion takeover offer for Primaris Retail Real Estate Investment Trust, one of Canada's largest shopping mall owners. The deal, if successful, would also see RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust buy five regional malls and three other shopping centres currently owned by Primaris for $1.1 billion. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

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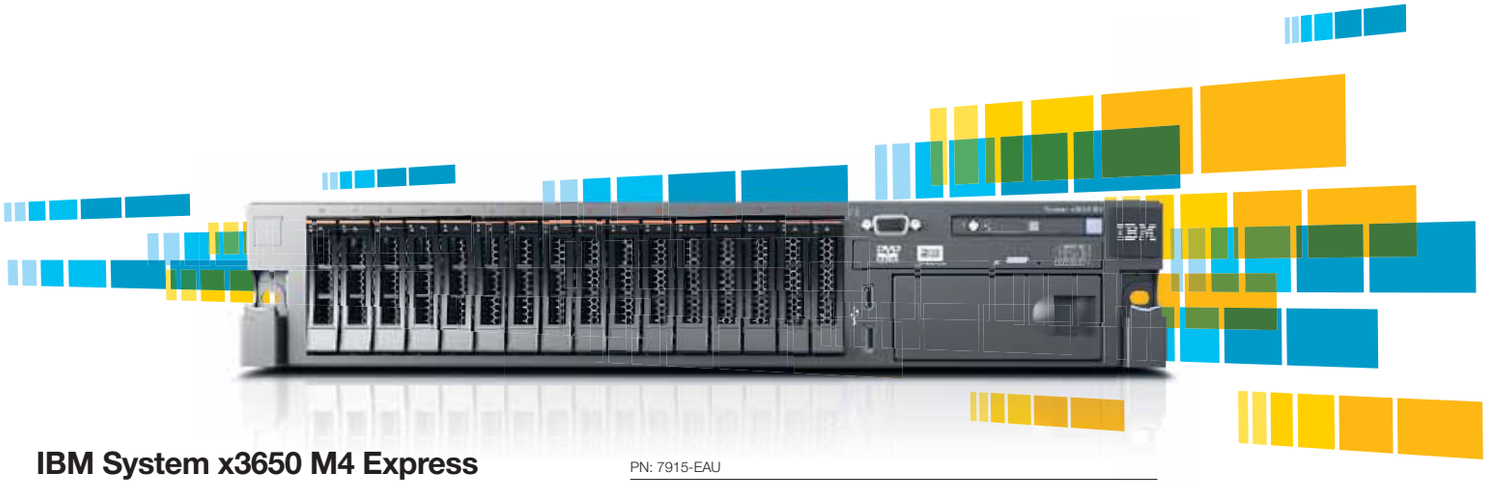

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1. TBR Report – "IBM System x® x86 servers: Meeting the demands of today's enterprises by combining value and support," January 2012. **2.** Source: Intel Performance comparison using SPECfp*_rate_base2006 benchmark. Baseline score of 267 on prior generation 2S Intel® Xeon® processor X5690 (3.46 GHz, 6 core, 12MB L3, 6.4 GT/s, 130W) based platform published at www.spec.org as of 6 Sept 2011. Estimated new score of 486 on 2S Intel® Xeon® processor E5-2690 (2.90 GHz, 8 core, 20MB L3, 8.0 GT/s, 135W) based platform is based on Intel internal measured estimates as of 6 Sept 2011 using two Intel® Xeon® processor E5-2690, Turbo Enabled, EIST Enabled, Hyper-Threading Enabled, 64 GB memory (8 x 8 GB DDR3-1600), Red Hat® Enterprise Linux Server 6.1 beta for x86_6, Intel® Compiler 12.1. **3.** x3650 M4 supports up to 768 GB of memory using 32 GB LRDIMMs in it 24 memory slots. Previous generation x3650 M3 supports up to 192 GB of memory. **4.** Ships with 4 1 Gb Ethernet ports standard and supports integrated slot-less 10 Gb Ethernet with Virtual Fabric. Previous generation server includes 2 1 Gb Ethernet slots and requires use of a PCI Express slot to support 10 Gb Ethernet. *Available later in 2012. IBM hardware products are manufactured from new parts or new and serviceable used parts. Regardless, our warranty terms apply. For a copy of applicable product warranties, visit http://www.ibm.com/servers/support/machine_warranties. IBM makes no representation or warranty regarding third-party products or services. IBM, the IBM logo, BladeCenter, System Storage, Storwize and System x are registered trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation registered in many jurisdictions worldwide. Other product and service names might be trademarks of IBM or other companies. For a current list of IBM trademarks, see www.ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml. Intel, the Intel logo, Xeon and Xeon Inside are trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and other countries. All prices and savings estimates are subject to change without notice, may vary according to configuration, are based upon IBM's estimated retail selling prices as of 11/06/12 and may not include storage, hard drive, operating system or other features. Reseller prices and savings to end users may vary. Products are subject to availability. This document was developed for offerings in Canada. IBM may not offer the products, features, or services discussed in this document in other countries. Contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner for the most current pricing in your geographic area. © 2012 IBM Corporation.

Dramatic turnaround

CBC gets top marks from Information Commissioner

The CBC has moved to the head of the class in the federal information watchdog's books. The public broadcaster received an A for its handling of Access to Information requests in 2011-12, up from an F for its performance two years ago.

Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault will release the latest report cards for the CBC and Canada Post on Thursday.

A copy of the CBC's assessment, obtained by The Canadian Press, says the broadcaster has made "dramatic improvements" since getting the failing grade for its 2009-10 efforts.

The access law allows people who pay $5 to seek access to federal files ranging from expense reports and email messages to briefing notes and internal audits. Federal departments and agencies are supposed to respond to requests within 30 days, but often take much longer — sometimes missing their own extended deadlines.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Starbucks brews up expansion plans

A Starbucks beverage cup is pictured outside a Chicago-area store Wednesday. Starbucks, the world's biggest coffee company, is planning to add at least 1,500 cafés in the U.S. over the next five years. The plan, which would boost the number of Starbucks cafés in the country by about 13 per cent, was announced Wednesday at the company's investor day in New York. Taking into account Canada and South America, the company aims to add a total of 3,000 new cafés in its broader Americas region. CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CRTC denies request to review Telus's foreign ownership

Telecom. Regulator says it's satisfied with way Vancouver firm complies with requirements

The CRTC has decided not to review the level of foreign ownership in Vancouver telecom company Telus Corp., saying Telus is following the compliance rules.

The telecom regulator said Tuesday that it has denied a request by new wireless competitor Wind Mobile to review foreign ownership of Telus.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission said it's satisfied with Telus's mechanisms to comply with foreign ownership requirements, which must not exceed 33.3 per cent.

Wind Mobile failed to demonstrate that Telus's board of directors had any reason to question information received about the level of foreign ownership, the CRTC said in its written decision. "Further, the commission is satisfied that Telus's mechanisms for ensuring its compliance are consistent with the provisions and requirements established in the regulations," the CRTC said.

The CRTC also said the onus is on carriers at all times to ensure they are complying with foreign ownership limits.

"The commission notes that the regulations establish the type of documentation required to demonstrate a shareholder's Canadian status. They also establish that, before taking any additional action, the carrier's board of directors must have information that causes it to believe that the declarations it has received are incorrect."

Telus spokesman Shawn Hall said Wednesday the decision verifies that Telus's foreign ownership controls are effective. "The issue that Globalive put forward simply didn't exist," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A CRTC logo is shown in Montreal on Sept. 10. The commission has turned down a request by Wind Mobile to review Telus's foreign ownership. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

By the numbers

32.6%

When Toronto-based Globalive — the parent company of wireless carrier Wind Mobile — made the complaint last summer, Telus had reported that its foreign ownership was 32.6 per cent. More recently, Telus said its foreign ownership had dropped to about 15 per cent, largely due to a U.S.-based hedge fund selling a chunk of its stake in the company.

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John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

I'm sick.

Not in the fun movie way where you get to take over cities and fight with Batman or Spider-Man.

Not in the whisky-commercial way where you whisper something amazing to your blond friend and her eyes go all wide because you're so darn naughty, you five-o'clock-shadowed bad boy.

And (this is the worst part) not even in the cough-cough cold-flu way where I get to admit that, yes, men are wimps and women are warriors and that's fine so long as I get some chicken soup and a pat on the head, many thanks.

No, instead I get to be sick in the way where you have a bunch of disparate symptoms and the doctors run tests and poke you with sticks and grimace at their clipboards before finally saying that your problem is "idiosymptomatic," which is doctorese for "I don't know. What do *you* think?"

Immune-system overdrive

My skin responds to soap as if it's a bar of plague (99.44 per cent pestilent), and to my clothes as if it's No. 30 sandpaper. You could get a reasonable steam going if I were to lie down in the middle of a sauna and you poured water on my groin.

Fortunately, I have a theory. I think, after many years of working in the businesses of newspapers, radio and the Internet, that I've become infected with the media.

I'll explain. My symptoms point to some sort of autoimmune problem, which sounds like I'm impervious to the War on the Car, but actually means that my body overreacts to everything.

For instance, my immune system is fighting a major battle on my face right now. I'm not sure what's at stake, but my nose appears to be a strategic ridge of some sort, perhaps as a lookout for the vast expanse of cheek that lies beyond. Sometimes I swear I can hear a little voice yell, "Charge!" though that may just be the mild fever.

My skin responds to soap as if it's a bar of plague (99.44 per cent pestilent), and to my clothes as if it's No. 30 sandpaper. You could get a reasonable steam going if I were to lie down in the middle of a sauna and you poured water on my groin.

On top of all that, previous illnesses have taught me that my blood clots too well. I'm a superhero, basically, though one of those anarchist ones who responds with disproportionate force.

Which brings me back to my theory that I've been infected with media: I don't mean that I've hooked up with Jennifer in the sports department or anything — I just mean that, after years spent in media organizations, my immune system has responded to problems like a typical journalist.

If a normal person noticed one bad thing in society — a stabbing, say — he'd call it an unfortunate fluke. Two instances, a coincidence. Three, a cause for concern.

But if a journalist notices one bad thing in society, it's a "tragedy." Two problems is a "rash." Three problems is an "epidemic." As you can see, we've been using medical terms all along.

I'm sure if you were to take a microscope and look into my bloodstream, you'd see a bunch of T cells wearing press hats and carrying notebooks, scurrying around in a panicked clot asking frantic questions in unison, ostensibly at invading viruses but often at nothing — or at a red blood cell shaped like a celebrity.

Happily, I know the best way to shut down a journalist. I plan to get ego massages until this problem subsides.

My gut tells me it's Christmas soon

ALEX GREENHOUGH AND PALOMA ORDONEZ MORAN/UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Science photography

Snowy close-up of human intestine

This Christmas scene, reminiscent of festive trees, is in fact an extreme close-up of a human intestine. It was captured by Alex Greenhough and Paloma Ordonez Moran of the University of Bristol, U.K., who are researching colorectal cancer. The "snow" was added by the scientists using a photo-editing program. METRO

Q&A

Image was 'a bit of fun'

What is this image?
Alex Greenhough: It's a study of the human intestine using a confocal microscope, to detect the presence of certain proteins and cell nuclei in the organ.

More specifically, my colleague and I are studying the protein beta-catenin to understand why it sometimes becomes deregulated in cells of the intestine and why it leads to the development of colorectal cancer.

By doing this research, we hope to further the understanding of cellular mechanisms that determine whether cells become cancerous, which we hope will lead to new opportunities for cancer prevention and therapy.

But this image seems more than science to you.
AG: Yes, the organized crypt-villus structures (of the intestine) in the image reminded me of Christmas trees. When I heard about the university's Art of Science photo competition, I remembered the image we had captured during our research, so I quickly decorated the trees with snow (white) and baubles (red) using Photoshop software as a bit of fun.
What do you hope the audience will take away from your image?
AG: That scientists are imaginative and artistic, and not the stereotypical eccentrics in white coats. METRO

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Twitter

@MrIanMacIntyre: A $7 million by-election all because Rob Ford refused to repay $3000 in improperly solicited donations. #RespectForTaxpayers? #TOpoli

@The_Hack_Show: #NHL Lockout is almost over?!?!?!? Apparently players playing overseas got texts saying 'get ready'!!! LORD I SEE THE LIGHT, OH BABY JESUS!

@RainbowSerena: Is there anywhere in #LdnOnt that sells Raspberry Pi boards?

@I_LuvTO2: Only drunken idiots want to sell the LCBO #TOpoli #Onpoli

@GTAListed: Legally Ousted as Mayor let Ford gets to remain in office until appeal? #Toronto Judge Makes Mistake! Should be 2moro's headline.

metro
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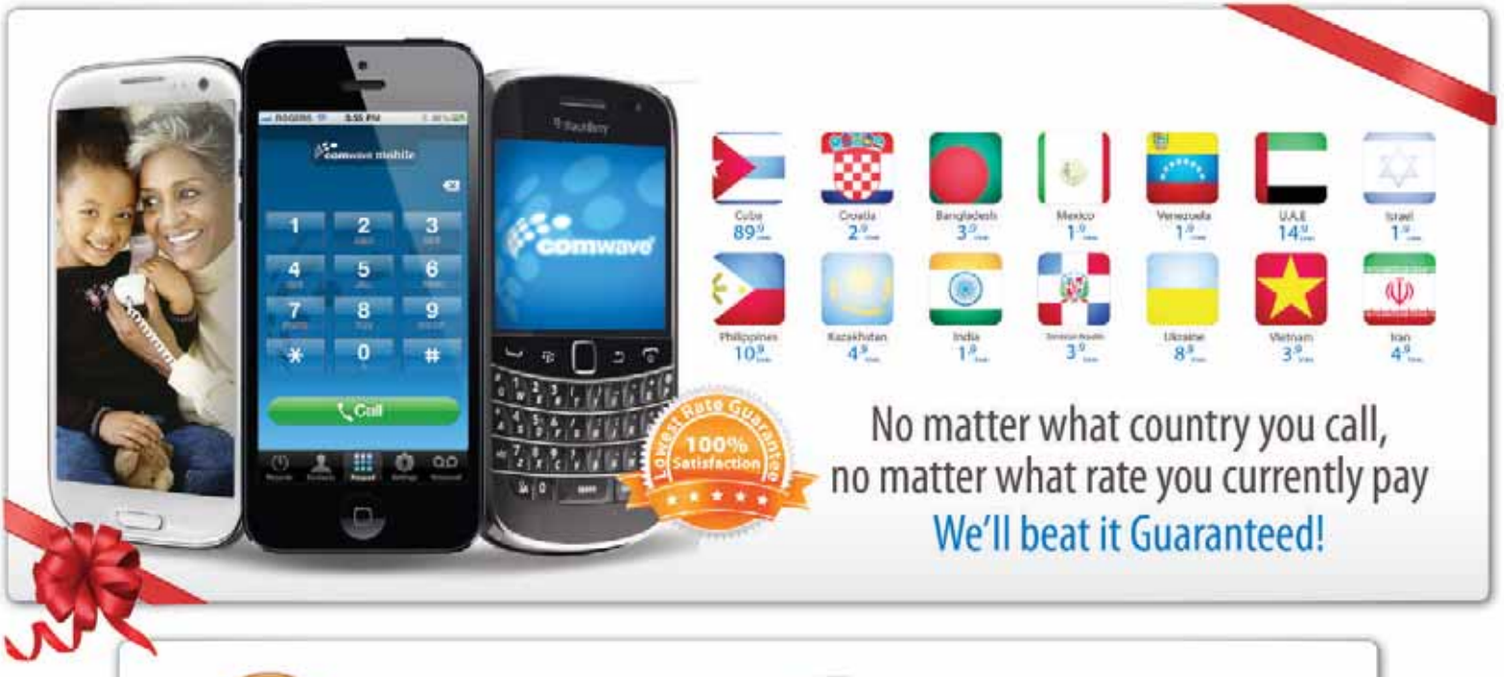

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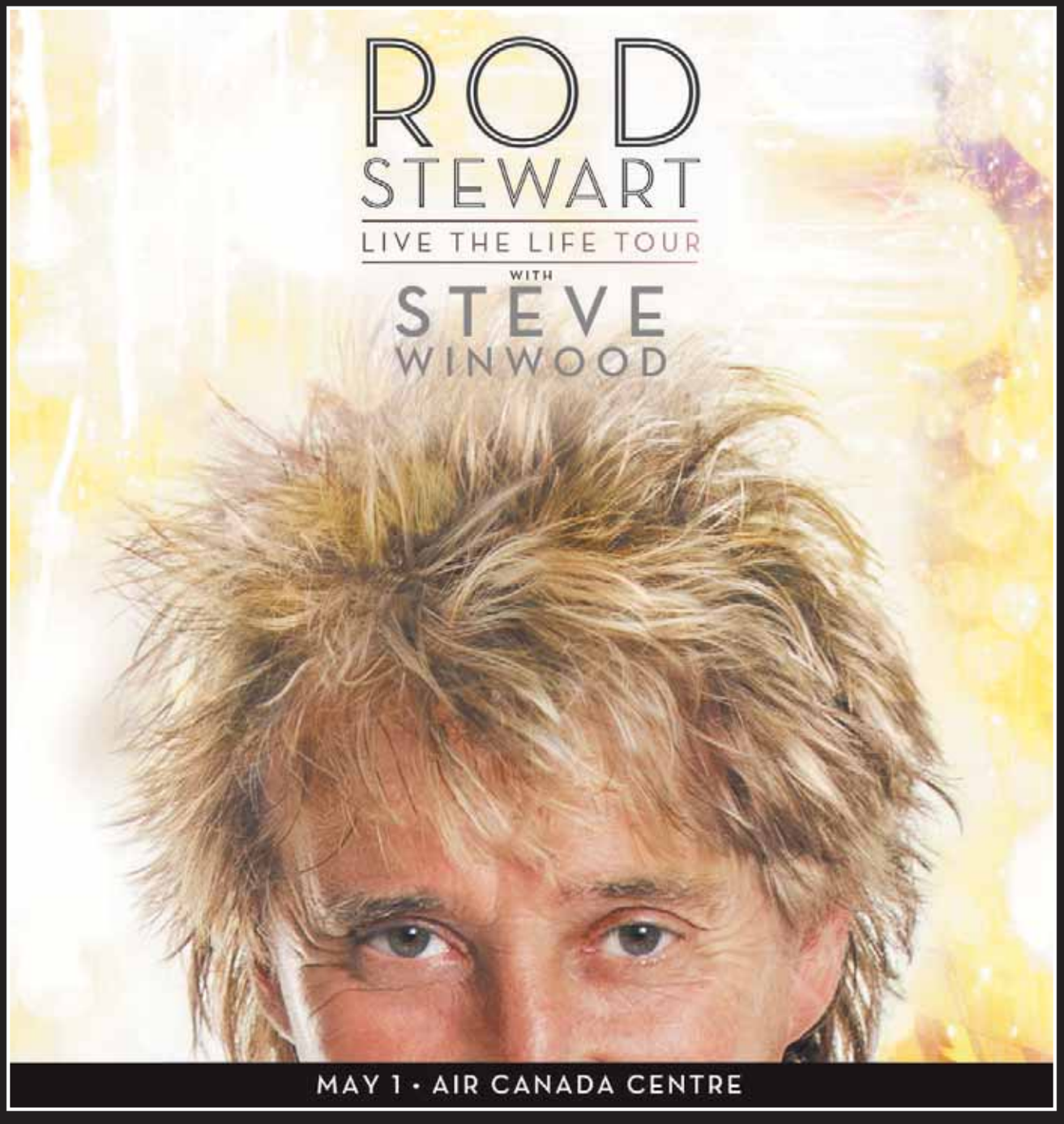

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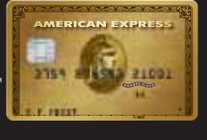

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Brothers Grimm's tales make for excellent source material

COC. Production tells the story of Jacob and Wilheim and their collection of stories

BACKSTAGE PASS
Ian Gormely
scene@metronews.ca

Their tales have been parlayed into theatre, television and film. We know their stories without evening realizing it. The folktales collected by the Brothers Grimm have infiltrated almost facet of Western storytelling, a feat the Canadian Opera Company will pay tribute to by hosting the 500th performance of The Brothers Grimm this weekend.

"Fairy tales and fables make for excellent source material," says Katherine Semcesen the COC's associate director of education and outreach. "They deal with morality and conflict in a cohesive way."

Contrary to popular belief, the brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm, did not write stories like Cinderella and Snow White that we've come to associate them with. Rather, they collected existing folklore and published it as Children's and Household Tales in the early nineteenth century, making them the Alan Lomax of folktales.

"They were approached by a publisher," explains Semcesen noting that the duo was more interested academic pursuits related to encyclopaedias and language.

"It was potentially something that might not have led to a lot of money."

After the tales were published, she says, the stories could be translated and studied and adapted in other cultures.

Child's play

Dean Burry, the man behind the Brothers Grimm, has a long history with the Canadian Opera Company, first working in the company's book office fifteen years ago as a University of Toronto music student. Burry also founded the COC's after-school program for kids and in 1999 was commissioned to come up with an children's opera based off of one of the Grimm brothers' tales. "He's very focused on operas for children," says Semcesen. "That's where his strength really lies."

One such adaptation, Dean Burry's the Brothers Grimm, acknowledges their impressive legwork. "The opera is about how they collected their tales, says Semcesen. It incorporates elements of Rapunzel, Rumpelstiltskin and Little Red Riding Hood.

Friday's show marks what the company believes is the opera's 500th performance since it premiered in 2001. Specifically aimed at children, approximately 120,000 kids have since seen the opera.

The performance is the marquee piece in the COC's Grimm Fest, which started Tuesday, and coincides with the 200th anniversary of Children's and Household Tales' original 1812 release, a celebration that continues to show how much content is buried in the Grimm's work, says Semcesen.

"It can really inspire people to really creative things," she says.

The Brother's Grimm – Dec 7, 7:30 p.m. Dec 8, 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m. Daniels Spectrum, 585 Dundas St. E. $15-25. Coc.ca/grimmfest

Rapunzel is just one of the classic fairy tales often attributed to the Brothers Grimm. HANDOUT

Sitcom television. Comic respect the tie that binds on Hot in Cleveland

Some say Hot in Cleveland is a more modern version of Golden Girls. HANDOUT

Sure, three's a crowd. But four is a hoot.

Just consider the stars of Hot in Cleveland, four funny ladies who would look right at home carved in the Mount Rushmore of comedy.

But rather than on a mountain ridge, this quartet was found one day last week at a tiny midtown Manhattan cafe whose other patrons looked on, bemused, at Valerie Bertinelli, Jane Leeves, Wendie Malick and, of course, Betty White huddled with a reporter at a corner banquette.

Their TV Land sitcom, now in its fourth season and airing Wednesdays, focuses on three slightly past-their-prime gal-pals from Los Angeles who decide to make a fresh start in Cleveland (of all places!), where they rent a house whose caretaker, played by White, serves as their salty companion and foil.

Hilarity ensues.

But not just on the show. Get these four women together and the laughter is nonstop. Which begs the question: When did each of them realize she was funny?

"I'm still waiting for that realization," says Bertinelli with a laugh.

How's that? As a teen nearly 40 years ago she was lobbing punch lines on the hit sitcom One Day at a Time, which ran on CBS for a decade.

"But then I went on to do all these movies of the week. And after that, I would go up for roles on sitcoms and people would say, 'She doesn't do comedy, does she?' So I started to doubt myself."

Laugh out loud

"The chemistry between us is that we all adore each other. No matter how much we deny it"

Betty White
On her Hot in Cleveland co-stars.

Hard to believe, considering her exuberance and thunderous guffaws.

"She's our little cheerleader," says Malick.

"The chemistry between us is that we all adore each other," says White with a laugh. "No matter how much we deny it."

"There's mutual respect," says Malick. "We've all been doing this for a long time. We're all seasoned. So is our crew and many of our writers."

"I'm a little over-seasoned," White pipes up.

But they all acknowledge misgivings at the outset: Hot in Cleveland was the first original scripted show on a little cable network that, until then, was exclusively a home for much-loved series from the past.

"I was a little nervous to be the guinea pig," says Bertinelli. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flashpoint ending with a two-part bang

Series finale. The first Canadian series since Due South to find international success is racing to the finish with a pair of heart-stopping episodes

Enrico Colantoni as Sgt. Gregory Parker in CTV's Flashpoint, Canada's cross-border cop smash. HANDOUT

Canada's cross-border cop smash Flashpoint is about to go out with a bang with an explosive two-part finale sending the elite team of Toronto officers racing to stop a serial bomber from taking the entire city hostage.

Flashpoint star Enrico Colantoni said it's a thrilling end to the made-in-Canada procedural, which airs Part 1 of a tense finale on Thursday. Part 2 airs Dec. 13.

Expectations are big for the conclusion, with Colantoni admitting that even he wondered how writers could adequately wrap up one of the country's top cop shows. Its nail-biting life-or-death crises have been a weekly tradition for five seasons.

"The expectation was always: How are they going to close it? How are they going to end it? And when you're used to doing a show that's operating at nine (out of 10) and 10 out of 10, you wonder what they will do. And they did (it)," Colantoni said from the set last June, where hallways were filled with "for sale" items including discarded wardrobe and a mish-mash of props.

"For the first time, my character really has to go outside of his comfort zone. ... There's no room for peace in these last two episodes, there's no room for calm, there's no room for stepping back. There's only being ahead of the situation and really living in the solution of it and (thinking) 'How are we going do this?' Because it's so outrageous and so crazy."

The two-part finale begins with the team discovering a sophisticated bomb hidden amid the computer servers of a 911 communications centre. From there, they learn more explosives have been stashed in other public buildings and that a deranged bomber is intent on inflicting widespread carnage.

In order to contain the threat, Team 1 joins forces with firefighters, paramedics and the military, resulting in a high-octane tribute to all emergency responders, said writer and co-creator Stephanie Morgenstern.

"I think we've managed to balance the sense of crisis and tragedy that we were looking for because the stakes are big," said Morgenstern, who launched the series with writer and co-creator Mark Ellis in July 2008.

Quoted

"The expectation was always: How are they going to close it?"

Enrico Colantoni
Flashpoint star

"But at the same time, (there's) a sense of life-affirming forward motion of the future of Team 1, that things are not completely coming to an end now, that there is a sense of a legacy for the team as well."

She said pains were taken to address ongoing storylines for Colantoni's team leader Sgt. Greg Parker, Hugh Dillon's sharp-shooter Ed Lane, Amy Jo Johnson's negotiator Jules Callaghan, David Paetkau's sniper Sam Braddock and Sergio Di Zio's explosives expert Spike Scarlatti.

"We knew where we wanted to take Sam and Jules and I think that's going to be satisfying for Sam and Jules fans," she said.

"We knew where we wanted take Parker and Ed and the others. I think (it was about satisfying) our own sense of: 'What gift can we give them to send them off into the future?' I think it was more of that rather than, 'Let's make sure we deal with this and then this and then this.'"

There's no question that Flashpoint has made its mark on the Canadian TV industry, proving to skeptics that homegrown fare could be popular, acclaimed and internationally successful all at the same time.

The slick show debuted four years ago on CTV and CBS, drawing 1.13 million viewers in Canada and 8.72 million viewers in the United States. It was the first Canadian series since Due South to air in network prime time on both sides of the border, paving the way for a wave of other Canadian series to also strike U.S. deals.

Although CBS eventually dropped Flashpoint (it was subsequently picked up by the U.S. specialty channel ION Television) the show found a home in more than 100 territories worldwide, including Germany, France and the Netherlands.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Model mom Reese set for award

March of Dimes.
Star will be honoured for being devoted and responsible parent at organization's Celebration of Babies event in Los Angeles

New mom Reese Witherspoon is being honoured by March of Dimes for being a model celebrity parent.

The 36-year-old Oscar winner and mother of three will receive the organization's Grace Kelly Award at its Celebration of Babies event Friday at the Beverly Hills Hotel. The award recognizes celebrity parents committed to healthy pregnancies and families.

Witherspoon gave birth in September to a son, Tennessee, with her husband, talent agent Jim Toth. She's also mom to Ava, 13, and Deacon, 8, from her previous marriage to actor Ryan Phillippe.

"I was very lucky to have a healthy delivery and leave the hospital with a healthy full-term infant, but so many families in this country do not get that experience," she said, adding that she hopes her involvement with March of Dimes calls attention to its efforts to prevent birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality.

Hollywood has a long history with March of Dimes, said event chair and Universal Pictures President Jimmy Horowitz. The tradition continues with this seventh annual celebrity luncheon, where star parents Susan and Robert Downey Jr., Brooke Shields and Chris Henchy, Elizabeth Banks and Max Handelman, and Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon are also expected. Cannon will serve as master of ceremonies for the private event.

The March of Dimes is also inducting new celebrity parents into its Stork Club. Members include Amanda Anka and Jason Bateman, Drew Barrymore and Will Koppelman, Megan Fox and Brian Austin Green.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I was very lucky to have a healthy delivery and leave the hospital with a healthy infant."

Actress Reese Witherspoon
On the arrival of her most recent child.

Reese Witherspoon to be honoured. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Ke$ha. Singer still loves the trashy life, but she's got respect from big names

Ke$ha. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Becoming one of pop's top-selling acts over the past two years hasn't changed Ke$ha much — the girl who got famous by celebrating the trashy life is still revelling in it.

On her new album, she sings fondly of warm Budweiser and gives a thumbs-down to Champagne. One track is about sex with a ghost. She drinks bottom-shelf Taaka vodka.

And before a recent photo shoot, Ke$ha let out a massive belch that sent her busy prep team into an awkward silence.

"I still love having really terrible house parties," said a relaxed and reflective Ke$ha during a recent interview. "I still don't live my life with my happiness being dependent on name brands or how much things cost or some sort of VIP club. ... I still love being kind of scummy, to be honest."

Her Warrior, released this week, flaunts the same uncouth attitude that propelled her debut Animal and EP Cannibal up the charts. Like those albums, Warrior is filled with upbeat, living-in-the-moment anthems like current single Die Young, now No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100.

But while Ke$ha isn't courting respect, she's getting it — and from an elite group in the music industry. Warrior features an expansion of collaborators beyond musical overseer Dr. Luke, the hitmaker who discovered and signed Ke$ha when she was 18. Among those on the album are Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Iggy Pop, Nate Ruess of fun., Patrick Carney of the Black Keys and Wayne Coyne of the Flaming Lips. Last year, the sometimes reclusive Andre 3000 did a verse for a remix of her track Sleazy.

Ke$ha said she pushed herself to put her "heart on the line" by reaching out to the musicians she admired.

"And then when they respond and they're down to collaborate with you, it's scary as an artist because you don't want to get into the room with somebody that you adore and have them think you suck," said Ke$ha, sporting a floppy black hat with a flower, a brightly patterned blazer and multiple rings on both hands as she sat in a rehearsal space before her well-received American Music Awards performance. "You never know how good you're going to be on a certain day or what they're going to think of you."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"You never know how good you're going to be on a certain day or what they're going to think of you"

Ke$ha on working with big-name artists

Bon Jovi's life isn't always a bed of roses

Rough 2012. Singer struggled as his daughter ran into trouble and Superstorm Sandy wreaked havoc on his beloved New Jersey

In a recent interview Jon Bon Jovi talked candidly about his daughter's apparent drug overdose. DAVE HALLMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jon Bon Jovi has been with his band for more than 30 years, so he could be considered something of an expert when it comes to the durability of rock stars. Still, even Bon Jovi is mystified at how the senior set is dominating on the stage.

"I can't get over it," said Bon Jovi, who will perform next week with Paul McCartney, The Who, Bruce Springsteen and a host of other superstars at the 12-12-12 concert at Madison Square Garden to benefit victims of Superstorm Sandy.

"I'm (expletive) dying already and I'm gonna go out there and play four songs. How do they do it?" he said, joking. "The Who and (Mick) Jagger and McCartney. ... I'm not going to be that journeyman. ... I'm not going to be that 75-year-old guy doing 150 shows a year."

But at 50, he's not ready for early retirement either. Bon Jovi has a couple of songs in the upcoming Al Pacino film, Stand Up Guys, and the band just completed their 12th studio album, What About Now, set for release early next year. They also have a world tour kicking off in Connecticut on Feb. 9.

Bon Jovi was in a jovial mood when he sat down last week to discuss his group's upcoming projects, but turned sombre when he discussed some of the more painful events to hit him in 2012: The devastation caused in his home state of New Jersey by Superstorm Sandy and the recent troubles of his 19-year-old daughter, Stephanie Bongiovi, found unresponsive in her dorm room at an upstate New York college last month after an apparent heroin overdose. Still, he discussed it all with candour — and optimism.

What was the intent of releasing the single, album and tour in stages?

I know how to do it. It's as simple as that. ... New songs are why artists go on the road. That's why I go on the road. It's a three-prong play. Writing: You're intrigued. Recording: It brings it to life. And then you want to share it.

Do you see similarities between you and Bruce Springsteen as philanthropists?

My philanthropy is no relation to anybody else's. None. My philanthropy and what we do at the foundation speaks for itself and has no relation to anyone's. I don't know what he does as a humanitarian. I have no clue. ... I'm talking about what I do at the Soul Kitchen (his community restaurant in New Jersey). It's a whole other level. It's millions of dollars in a foundation that does stuff.

With your daughter recently in the news, how do you go forward from there?

I didn't have any sisters. We bring home this girl the first day. Now what? Where's the manual? There was no manual. So you bring her up the best you can, you surround her with hugs and kisses and know that she may eventually fall down. I appreciate the outpouring of kindness in light of what happened in my household. I'm shocked as much as the next parent with this situation and had no idea. But then you surround them with best help and love and move on, and that's where we're at with it. Steph is a great kid. Great GPA. Cool school, Hamilton College up in Clinton, N.Y. Everything about it is idyllic. She was doing great. Then a sudden and steep decline. Hopefully, we caught it when we did and that's the end of it. But who knew? I've got three more to come.

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Good luck trying to

Music award season. Popular albums missing nomination deadline, music politics muddy this Grammy season

Quote

"It was sort of an iffy kind of year in my opinion. I'm going to be honest: I think the politics kind of slowed the music down."

Sean Garrett
Music producer on why this year is so hard to call a clear winner

It's a brutal year to be in the Grammy nominations predictions game.

Sure, there are a few safe bets. Mumford & Sons and Frank Ocean are expected to take a share of nominations when they're announced.

And popular songs by Gotye, fun., Taylor Swift and Carly Rae Jepsen may land those artists on the list as well, though Jepsen harbours some doubt her omnipresent song Call Me Maybe will net a nod.

"I would be so shocked," the 27-year-old singer said last week. "But this year has taught me to look forward to surprises and just be ready for anything. So, cross your fingers for me."

Viral songs like Jepsen's seemed to be the theme of the year, and with no watershed albums during the nominating period for the 2013 Grammys like Adele's 21 or Kanye West's My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy, it's not clear who will turn out as this year's top nominee.

Thus the guessing game.

The Grammy nominations period ended Sept. 30 and three of the year's top four debuting albums — from Swift, One Direction and Jason Aldean — came after that date. Rihanna also released a new album after the period ended.

All could have songs nominated, but a popular album is the quickest way to accumulate multiple nods.

Mumford & Sons slipped in just under the deadline. Introduced to much of their burgeoning fan base through a 2011 appearance on the Grammys, the British folk-rock band could return with a flourish after selling 600,000 copies of Babel in the first week of release and setting streaming records on Spotify.

And Ocean showed the kind of bravery that might be rewarded by The Recording Academy's voters when he announced in liner notes for his album Channel ORANGE that he'd had a same-sex encounter, causing an industry-wide discussion of the issue.

Questions surround many of the other artists who might be considered sure bets, however. Gotye should be a lock in multiple categories, but his viral song Somebody That I Used to Know, featuring Kimbra, wasn't submitted in the song of the year category because of a sample, eliminating one of its most viable prospects.

Others who might be considered possible top nominees like Drake and The Black Keys released their

handicap the Grammys

Carly Rae Jepsen and her catchy tune Call Me Maybe seem like obvious choices but even the singer isn't sure what to expect. GETTY IMAGES

like Drake and The Black Keys released their platinum-selling, hit-spawning albums late last year and they'll have to overcome short-term memory issues among voters.

Sean Garrett, a producer for artists like Usher and Beyonce with multiple Grammy nominations, said a lack of clear trends during the nominating period made it difficult to guess going into the show.

"It was sort of an iffy kind of year in my opinion," Garrett said in a phone interview. "I'm going to be honest: I think the politics kind of slowed the music down."

He expects pop stars like Jepsen, Bieber, Swift and Korean sensation PSY to take home nominations, but doesn't see an artist accumulating a high number of nominations. That could leave room for newer acts, some of which he claims are his favourites. "They have a very clever sound," Garrett said.

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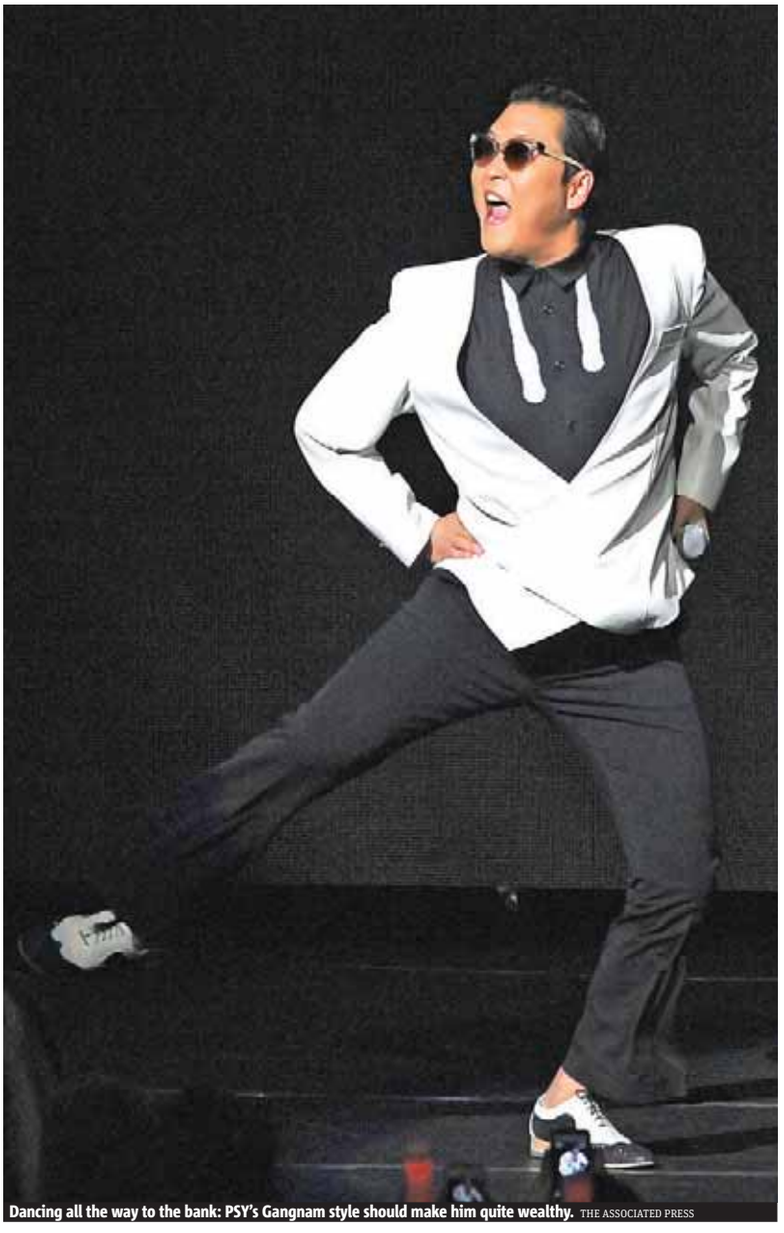


Dancing all the way to the bank: PSY's Gangnam style should make him quite wealthy. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

How Gangnam Style will make PSY a millionaire

Financial breakdown. Be it YouTube, downloads or TV ads, the Korean sensation is set to make millions from one song

As Gangnam Style gallops toward one billion views on YouTube, the first Asian pop artist to capture a massive global audience has gotten richer click by click. So too has his agent and his grandmother.

But the money from music sales isn't flowing in from the rapper's homeland South Korea or elsewhere in Asia. With one song, 34-year-old Park Jae-sang — better known as PSY — is set to become a millionaire from YouTube ads and iTunes downloads, underlining a shift in how money is being made in the music business.

An even bigger dollop of cash will come from TV commercials. From just those sources, PSY and his camp will rake in at least $7.9 million this year, according to an analysis by The Associated Press of publicly available information and industry estimates. But for online music sales in South Korea, he'll earn less than $60,000.

Here's how it works.

YouTube

Gangnam Style, with its catchy tune and much imitated horse-riding dance, is the most-watched video on YouTube ever. The viral video has clocked more than 880 million YouTube views since its July release, beating Justin Bieber's Baby, which racked up more than 808 million views since February 2010. PSY's official channel on YouTube, which curates his songs and videos of his concerts, has nearly 1.3 billion views.

TubeMogul, a video ad buying platform, estimates that PSY and his agent YG Entertainment have raked in about $870,000 as their share of the revenue from ads that appear with YouTube videos. The Google Inc.-owned video service keeps approximately half. PSY and YG Entertainment also earn money from views of videos that parody his songs. Google detects videos that use copyrighted content. Artists can have the video removed or allow it to stay online and share ad revenue with YouTube.

In the last week of September, when Gangnam Style had 300 million views, more than 33,000 videos were identified by the content identification system as using Gangnam Style. But since YouTube can be accessed from all over, wouldn't Asia be responsible for a chunk of the $870,000? The countries with the second and third-highest views of the video are Thailand and South Korea. And the country with the most views of PSY's song? The U.S.

Legal downloads, CDs

Gangnam Style has been downloaded 2.7 million times in the U.S. and has been the No. 1 or No. 2 seller for most weeks since its debut, according to Nielsen SoundScan.

The song sells for $1.29 on Apple's iTunes Store, the market leader in song downloads. Apple generally keeps about 30 per cent of all sales, so the PSY camp could be due more than $2.4 million. How much PSY keeps and how much goes to his managers, staff and record label is unclear. South Korean industry insiders said PSY likely gets 70 per cent and YG Entertainment 30 per cent for U.S. downloads.

But earnings from downloads in PSY's homeland are far from an embarrassment of riches. South Koreans pay less than $10 a month for a subscription to a music service that allows them to download hundreds of songs or have unlimited access to a music streaming service. That makes the cost of a downloaded song about 10 cents on average. The average price for streaming a song is 0.2 cents.

Gangnam Style was downloaded more than 3.6 million times and streamed around 40 million times. That adds up to a little more than $61,000. As for many other parts of Asia, illegal downloads and pirated CDs are so pervasive that only a small minority are willing to pay up for the legal versions.

TV commercials

PSY has been jetting around the world, performing on shows such as The X-Factor Australia and NBC's Today Show, but such programs usually cover travel costs and not much else, said Gary Bongiovanni, editor-in-chief of concert trade magazine Pollstar.

It is TV commercials that are the big money spinner for the most successful of South Korea's K-pop stars. PSY has been popping up in TV commercials in South Korea for top brands such as Samsung Electronics and mobile carrier LG Uplus. Chung Yu-seok, an analyst at Kyobo Securities, estimates PSY's commercial deals would amount to five billion won ($4.6 million) this year.

The family

A fact little known outside South Korea is that PSY's father, uncle and grandmother own a combined 30 per cent of DI Corp., a company which makes equipment that semiconductor companies use to make computer chips.

It's a stretch to plausibly explain how the success of Gangnam Style will boost DI's profits, but that doesn't matter to the South Korean stock market. Perhaps inspired by the pure power of pop, DI shares surged eightfold from July after PSY's hit reached No. 2 on the Billboard Hot 100 and No. 1 on the U.K. singles chart.

It was time to cash in for PSY's grandmother, who sold 5,378 shares for about $65,000. The share price has fallen since then, but is still about double what it was before the release of Gangnam Style. PSY's agent YG Entertainment has also done well. Its share price is up about 30 per cent since mid-July. The value of CEO Yang Hyun-suk's stake has swelled to about $200 million, making him the richest man in South Korea's entertainment industry.

The future

The question now hanging over PSY is whether he will replicate the blockbuster success of Gangnam Style or end up remembered as a one-hit wonder.

"When this slows down, what comes next for PSY?" said Nielsen analytics vice-president David Bakula. "Is it the evolution of a new musical style, something audiences are going to be craving, or is it something that's just a passing fancy?" Analysts say Gangnam Style alone will not be enough to propel PSY into the ranks such as Adele and may not even be enough to make him the top-grossing K-pop star. That will depend largely on his upcoming album, which PSY said will be released in March.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One-hit wonder?

"When this slows down, what comes next for PSY?"

David Bakula, Nielsen analytics vice-president.

Seattle rap duo shake up hip hop paradigm

Macklemore & Ryan Lewis. Rappers' gay-friendly song Same Love defies old genre conventions with style

Macklemore isn't ashamed to tell you he was scared when he saw some of the destinations for his upcoming tour.

Idaho. Montana. Texas.

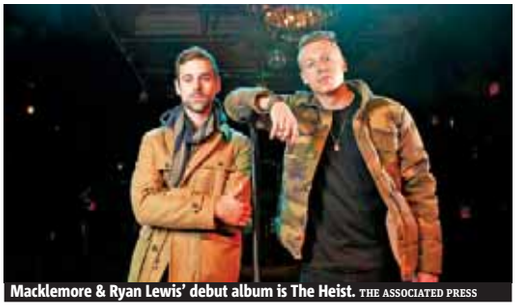
None of those places in the Heartland seemed like they'd be receptive to Macklemore & Ryan Lewis' left-leaning, socially conscious message. A hostile reception seemed more likely — especially for the lightning-rod song Same Love, which offers support for the gay community.

To the 29-year-old rapper's surprise, he found the crowds singing the chorus right back at him. "Those were three places where people probably sang the loudest and it gives me some hope in the power of music and what music can do," said the MC, whose given name is Ben Haggerty. "To hear people's testimonials about Same Love changing the way that they feel about gay people or the language that they use in their everyday life, making them consider changing that language, or changing their hateful perspective on another group of people, it's exciting to see that music has that capability. It just affirms what you already believe, but to see it on a tangible level in these cities has been one of the greatest gifts of my career."

It's a time of plenty for the Seattle alternative hip-hop duo, which released its debut studio album, The Heist, to great acclaim last month. Haggerty and his producing and business partner Lewis sold more than 78,000 copies of the record the first week of release. That's a staggering sum for an independent release, putting the album at No. 2 on the Billboard 200 all-genre chart.

Haggerty said they expected to sell somewhere between 28,000 and 33,000 copies.

"It's a validation, absolutely," Haggerty said in a phone interview. "It's definitely a reward. But at the end of the day, it is a number and you try not to let your happiness be contingent upon a number. What it equates to is the fact people are resonating with the music, that the fans are supporting our album, that people wanted to be part of our record and not just download illegally, but financially get behind it and say, 'We believe in it.' And that is the biggest reward out of all of it."



Macklemore & Ryan Lewis' debut album is The Heist. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

What's happened in the six weeks since the release has been dizzying. Lewis said offers are coming from everywhere and the fans are increasing exponentially at every show. Things are happening so fast, reacting in real time to the changes in their popularity has been difficult. Used to dealing with fans in a very personal way, they're trying to engage larger groups of people.

"Now we have to figure how to keep that intimate relationship with the fans in the midst of so many people," Lewis said. "And that's across the board. The shows get bigger. How do we adapt our shows to keep it as awesome as it was for 800 people to 4,000 people? We're adapting." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Julie Andrews won't stop sharing her voice

New ventures. The Sound of Music star may not be able to sing like she used to, but she's found a new love in books and theatre

It may take a big spoonful of sugar to make this go down: Julie Andrews says that her four-octave voice is not coming back.

The Oscar and Tony Award-winning actress said in a recent interview that a botched operation to remove non-cancerous throat nodules in 1997 affected her singing talent. It has permanently limited her range and her ability to hold notes.

"The operation that I had left me without a voice and without a certain piece of my vocal chords," said Andrews, who starred in such quintessential stage and film musicals as The Sound of Music, My Fair Lady and Mary Poppins.

The actress says she can still speak "pretty well" and can still hit a few bass notes, "So if you wanted a rendition of Old Man River you might get it, but I'm not singing as much these days."

Andrews has sung publicly several times since then, including a performance in the 2004 film The Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement and in a 2010 London concert, but called these performances "speak-singing."

The 77-year-old, however, says she has rediscovered her voice in her books and in directing theatre.

Her latest children's book, Little Bo in London: The Ultimate Adventure of Bonnie Boadicea has just been released by Harper Collins. It's the fourth and final book in the series about a possibly magical ship's cat that travels the world with the man who rescued her.

It's the 27th book she's co-written with her daughter, Emma Walton Hamilton.

She's also directing a musical theatre adaptation of another of her books, The Great American Mousical. The show, about a troop of acting mice living beneath the floors of a famous Broadway theatre, is being performed at the Goodspeed Theatre in Connecticut through Sunday. Andrews thinks it "would do very well on Broadway," where she says she would like to direct and produce.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Julie Andrews has just released her latest children's book, Little Bo in London: The Ultimate Adventure of Bonnie Boadicea. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Maria von Trapp's wisdom

- **New opportunities.** Julie Andrews says in a strange way that she feels fortunate that she no longer can sing because it pushed her to find a "different way" of using her voice. Paraphrasing a line from her Sound of Music character Maria von Trapp, Andrews noted that when "one door closes, another window opens."

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Rihanna ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Rihanna getting set to marry Chris Brown?

Anyone who follows Rihanna's Twitter feed knows that Chris Brown is definitely back in her life in a big way.

But the latest news still comes as a shock.

Rihanna is reportedly planning to marry Brown in a secret New Year's Eve ceremony while the pair are visiting her native Barbados for the holidays, according to Hollyscoop.

One person not too thrilled about the rumoured wedding? Rihanna's mom.

"She called Rihanna to yell at her, asking what she's doing with her life," a source says.

Quote

"She called Rihanna to yell at her, asking what she's doing with her life."

Source
Talking about Rihanna's mother's reaction to the news she may marry Chris Brown.

The Word

Laxative lands LeAnn Rimes in more trouble

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

There was a time when LeAnn Rimes was world-famous for her talent.

Right? It's hard for me to remember that long ago.

Now she's just known for the petty drama with her long-suffering husband, Eddie Cibrian, and his ex, Brandi Glanville.

The latest?

Glanville is professing to a tabloid that she doesn't want Rimes around her sons, Mason, 9, and Jake, 5, because, according to her, they mistake her laxatives for candy.

"I, unfortunately, don't find her to be stable and I don't want her around my kids when Eddie's not there — or at least the nanny, his parents, someone," Glanville says of Rimes to Us Magazine.

"Mason, my eldest, ate some of Le's candies and got extremely ill. And Le's candies are laxatives. She has one in every purse. Mason found one on the floor and thought it was a Skittle! They don't keep sugar in the house," Glanville explains.

"He thought he finally found candy."

You know, you'd think in between learning shapes and colours, L.A. preschools would also teach life lessons to children being raised by celebrity parents.

They could teach the difference between a Skittle and a laxative or the difference between your nanny and your mother — the list is endless.

Twitter

@ZacharyQuinto
if you are taking pictures with your iPad: i have absolutely no interest in taking our relationship any further than the picture.

@rustyrockets
I'm in Melbourne. Where do I go? What do I do? Who will love me?

@RealMichelleT
Getting the Final Jeopardy answer. #Priceless

@Joan_Rivers
The IRS seized Lindsay's bank accounts to settle her tax debt of $233,904. Why bother? They'll get the same amount by returning her empties.

Eddie Murphy

Murphy's movies do little for studio profits

Eddie Murphy has earned the dubious honour of the Most Overpaid Actor in Hollywood, according to Forbes magazine's annual list. For every dollar that a studio paid Murphy for his last three movies, the studio earned $2.30, the worst rate of return for a star in the business.

His only film released this year, the poorly reviewed A Thousand Words, pulled in roughly $20 million worldwide but cost an estimated $40 million to produce.

Second on the list is Katherine Heigl, earning studios an average of $3.40 for every dollar she's paid.

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Easy to do holiday 'dos

Kristen Stewart's hair stylist Adir Abergel walks us through festive hairstyles that are simple enough to do on the fly in your bedroom, but look like you've spent hours in a salon.

ROMINA McGUINNESS
life@metronews.ca

The low chignon

"This look is classic and chic and can do no wrong," Abergel says. "It's both sophisticated and modern and will work for any kind of event you're heading off to."

1 Apply a volumizing styling whip to damp hair and blow-dry.

2 Create a centre part that is low and flat

3 Wrap the hair around the ponytail to create a low bun.

4 Secure your hair using some bobby pins.

5 Spray the entire look with hairspray in order to hold everything in place.

Get the look

SHINE: Frederic Fekkai Brilliant Glossing cream $25, fekkai.com

HOLD: Bumble & Bumble Curl Conscious Holding Foam $28, bumbleandbumble.com

Casual waves

"It's no surprise that we often see this look on Hollywood celebrities as well as models when they are off-duty. These easy waves are naturally beautiful, laid-back and glamorous at the same time," Abergel explains. "And it's also much easier to copy than you'd think."

1 Apply UV protectant spray to damp hair before blowing it dry.

2 Separate your dry hair from the front to the back behind the ears and clip up.

3 Take the back section of your hair, split it in two, and clip up one of the sides

4 Take one vertical section of hair from top to bottom

5 Grab a hot iron and roll away from your face (as you roll, make sure you twist at the same time).

6 Once the hair is heated through, gently take it off the roller and let it set so the waves cool in place.

7 Repeat the above on other side.

8 Once you've gone through all the hair, run your fingers though to get your desired look.

9 Finish off with some hairspray to keep your look for longer without allowing the hair to go stiff or sticky.

The pin-straight blow-dry

"This elegant look is perfect for showing off shiny, healthy hair, and who doesn't want that? Glossy hair is the perfect accessory to any outfit and this sleek look is the best way to show it off," Abergel says.

1 Apply a lifting and texturizing spray or gel to damp hair at the roots and blow dry by scrunching your hair until it's completely dry.

2 Divide the top of your hair into two sections. Take the front section and brush it forward with a large round brush. Wrap the hair around the brush, roll it up and blow-dry it out slowly in order to smooth the hair as much as possible. Repeat with the back section.

3 After smoothing the hair out, wrap each section around a large velcro roller and clip it into place.

4 Flat iron the rest of hair in order to straighten it one section at a time. Focus on the middle and the ends of the hair so that the volume is kept at the roots. Remove the rollers, comb out both sections and flat iron from the middle to ends of the hair only, not from the roots.

5 Set the look using hairspray and a glossing mist.

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DONNA KARAN

The designer's new book, Stephan Weiss: Connecting The Dots, celebrates the paintings and sculptures of her late husband. She opens up about her connection to the art world.

IN SEARCH OF LOST TIME

KENYA HUNT
life@metronews.ca

Stephan Weiss: Connecting the Dots (Assouline) ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

Stephan was known for his paintings of abstract forms made of linked dots. How did his artwork influence your approach to fashion design?
Stephan was fascinated with energy, movement and form. His work was all about connecting the dots, where he would throw random dots on the page and quickly "connect" them with strokes and watch forms emerge. As a sculptor, he loved the curvature of the human form. There was an organic freedom to Stephan's work I so admired, and I've designed collections that paid homage to Stephan's art through the sculptural play of body, fabric and motion.

How did it feel revisiting so many personal memories for the book?
It's been an amazing experience. It wasn't that it was new — I live with so much of Stephan's art — but it was seeing Stephan's art and times all in one place. I've never seen Stephan's work as a complete collection before. The same for the personal photographs. I've had collages of them in the past, but they've been in boxes for a long time. It was wonderful to see them brought out and put together in one place like a visual journal of our lives.

How did he effect the way you look at contemporary art?
Art was such a huge part of our life together. We would go to museums and exhibitions anywhere we travelled. I bought Stephan a Francis Bacon painting one year — it was the perfect gift to give a man who had everything. We also worked together on behalf of the Dia Art Foundation, an organization in New York that supports and exhibits contemporary art.

Do you feel a certain connection with the contemporary art world?
Very much so. I love the excitement of contemporary art, because it's original, unique and a reflection of our times. I especially love contemporary art that references the past, combining it with the present as it looks to the future.

What are some museums that you find particularly inspiring?
I love, love, love the Tate in London. There's always something new and inspiring going on. I also love the Guggenheim in New York — the building alone takes my breath away. And, of course, there's the Met, which will always be awe-inspiring no matter how many times you visit. It manages to always have something new to say, starting with the costume exhibits.

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@Jeanne_Beker: With the stunning @SarahGadon who's receiving a Crystal Award today from @WIFT #crystalawards

@Jeanne_Beker: My beautiful mom, circa 1957. She'll be 92 next Sunday!! (Bless her....)

@Jeanne_Beker: With top Cdn Dior make-up artist Annemarie Vandermeer @TheHudsonsBayCo @ Sherway_Gardens

@Jeanne_Beker: Sleek, sassy and seductive are the operative words @gretconstantine

The Kit

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Ottawa

Lainy

Political Analyst and thrift store enthusiast

Age: 34

What she's wearing
Vintage boots from Kensington Market, pants bought at Marshalls, blazer by Alfred Sung, scarf was a gift from a friend.

Her inspiration
"I'm a sucker for thrift stores and bargains — nothing is more fun than finding a great deal on style!"

THE KIT PHOTOBLOGGER: JUSTYNA BARANIECKI, CHAMELEONIC.CO

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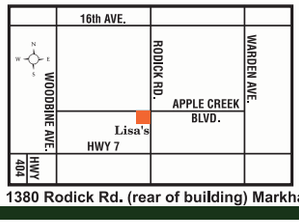

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25	26	27	28	29	30	

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Get an 'ugly sweater' to merry you

The good, the bad, the kitschy. A 'seasonal sweater' is one way to start a conversation at a holiday function

It's a look that can mean all sorts of things: sequins, bows, Fair Isle patterns, bunny rabbits and bird motifs, or even antlers. There's a fine line between a good seasonal sweater and a good one gone bad.

Even those have a place, though. Yup, there are ugly sweater parties and ugly sweater blogs. Stand Up To Cancer is hosting a social-media online ugly sweater fundraising campaign.

But before we go there, fashion insiders say there's a way to have your novelty and fun with style: Wear it in the right spirit.

From Saks Fifth Avenue to J. Crew and C. Wonder, carry good tidings and festive trimmings wherever you go. They bring a smile — and they're a good icebreaker, says style commentator Suze Yalof Schwartz.

Who could resist commenting on the glitzy giant bow sweater, she says. But wearer beware: You will be the centre of attention.

The Fair-Isle-inspired pattern. OLD NAVY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The ever-popular animal graphic. OLD NAVY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

We all heart polka dot patterns. OLD NAVY / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Saks way to do the sweater is "tasteful" with the right playful attitude, says Colleen Sherin, the retailer's senior fashion director. It's not going to be covered in Santas, but it could be decorated with clear or metallic sequins, for example.

"It's a trend for us — embellished tops and that includes embellished knits," says Sherin. "It's nodding to the festive nature of the season, but we're also seeing embellishment for daytime as a trend."

Anu Narayanan, Old Navy's vice-president of women's merchandising, says you don't have to wait for the party invite.

"In my opinion, a seasonal sweater is anything that signals the change in weather. Its the iconic, go-to item that makes you feel like being cozy near a fire with a cup of cocoa. For some it may be a chunky cable, for others a holiday motif or a bit of shine," says Narayanan.

Narayanan puts antlers, snowflakes and sparkle on her list of seasonal-sweater dos. Just don't wear them all at once.

"You don't want to have it all with these sweaters," agrees Schwartz, who also warns against combining this with another popular look of layering prints and patterns.

Take your one novelty item — making sure the sweater is a long, lean shape and in a thin knit — and pair it with something simple and slim on the bottom, maybe skinny jeans or leather leggings, says Schwartz, editor-in-chief of the blog TallSkinnyRich.com.

Narayanan envisions these sweaters with a pencil skirt and tights, or maybe boyfriend jeans rolled at the cuff with a heel or slim cords with ballet flats.

Of course, the most traditional vintage ski design or a Fair Isle goes with fitted apres-ski stretch pants and a fur-trimmed down vest.

Kids and teens could get away with something a little more outrageous, they have a knack for making kitschy cool, says Tara Ryan, head of design for Mini Boden. "Tween girls, especially, really like quite cheesy things done in an amusing and clever way. They like the scale to be unexpected or add an unexpected twist. They maybe would wear reindeer antlers (on their sweaters) instead of the reindeer face."

Younger kids seem partial to sweaters covered with woodland creatures, including foxes, owls and birds, she reports, and while boys like the traditional colours, girls like shine and bright shades.

So many girls seem to have motorcycle-style boots in their closets, too, and they are the perfect counterbalance to the seasonal sweater — no matter what your age, Ryan says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

How not to wear

- **Be mindful of the company you might be keeping.** Pull out the sweater on your way to a holiday brunch, a lunch with girlfriends or a family gathering, not the office party or dinner at your husband's boss' house.
- **Don't accessorize with a straight face.** "You are out to have fun in this," says style commentator Suze Yalof Schwartz. "You are not wearing it talking politics or how to save the world."

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Alexander the Great: Balenciaga gets boost

Fashion's future. Conoisseur of cool to bring modern aesthetic to classic brand

Young downtown designer Alexander Wang is taking over the creative direction of storied Paris fashion label Balenciaga, likely bringing his cool-girl, sporty look to a house made famous by its founder for graceful, fluid lines.

The company made the announcement on Monday that 28-year-old Wang would fill the spot vacated last month by Nicolas Ghesquiere, who left after a 15-year run there.

Wang's "proven talent, modernity and individual and cosmopolitan vision of design will naturally embrace and enrich the unique heritage of this fashion house," said Isabelle Guichot, president and CEO of Balenciaga, said in a statement.

Wang comes with credibility: His seasonal runway shows are considered bellwethers of fast-fashion trends, and he has won Council of Fashion Designers of America awards in womenswear and accessory design.

Alexander Wang. GETTY IMAGES

Wang will oversee those categories as well as menswear, and he'll help craft Balenciaga's overall image.

"I am deeply honoured to embark on this new role for a brand and house that I have such great admiration and respect for," Wang said.

Still, he'll likely bring a different — and maybe more casual — sensibility to a company founded by Spanish designer Cristobal Balenciaga, a contemporary of Coco Chanel and Christian Dior. The brand was founded in 1919, but Balenciaga started making real waves in fashion with its first Paris collections in 1937.

Labour of love

"I am deeply honoured to embark on this new role for a brand and house that I have such great admiration and respect for."
Alexander Wang

Balenciaga died in 1972, and the house didn't fully regain its footing until Ghesquiere took over in 1997 and brought critical acclaim along with pop-star fans such as Beyoncé and Rihanna.

Wang has a similar celebrity appeal and he's a favourite with fashion editors and the models. At his show last February, for example, he staged a catwalk comeback for the likes of Gisele Bundchen, Carmen Kass and Shalom Harlow.

Wang will continue his New York-based signature collection.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

With Hanukkah stretching over eight nights, offer variety of treats

"The Spice Cookies are loosely inspired by the German Christmas favourite Pfeffernusse and are actually more closely related to an Italian spice cookie," write Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi in Jerusalem: A Cookbook.

Ottolenghi and Tamimi, who both emigrated from Jerusalem to London, England, say the cookies are popular at their four Ottolenghi restaurants over the period of Hanukkah and Christmas.

The Festival of Lights begins at sundown Saturday and ends on Dec. 16.

Spice Cookies

This recipe makes 16 cookies. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. Soak currants in brandy for 10 minutes.

2. In bowl, mix flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, spices, salt and dark chocolate. Mix with a whisk.

3. In stand mixer fitted with beater attachment, place butter, sugar, vanilla and lemon and orange zest and beat to combine, about 1 minute. With mixer running, slowly add egg and mix for about 1 minute. Add dry ingredients, currants and brandy. Mix until it comes together.

4. Gently knead dough in bowl with hands until it comes together. Divide dough into chunks (each about 50 ml/1/4 cup) and shape each chunk into a perfectly round ball. Place balls on baking sheets lined with parchment paper, spacing 2 cm (3/4 inch) apart, and let rest in fridge at least 1 hour.

5. Heat oven to 190 C (375 F). Bake cookies 20 minutes, until tops firm up but centres are still slightly soft. Remove from oven; let cool 5 minutes and then transfer to a wire rack. While cookies are still warm, whisk together glaze ingredients until a thin and smooth icing forms. Pour 15 ml (1 tbsp) of the glaze over each cookie, leaving it to drip and coat cookie with a very thin, almost transparent film. Finish each with 3 pieces of candied peel placed at the centre. Leave to set and serve. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ JERUSALEM BY YOTAM OTTOLENGHI AND SAM TAMIMI**

Dietary restrictions

Please note, the recipes on this page may not meet specific dietary restrictions.

Ingredients

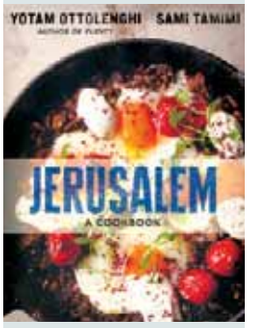
- 175 ml plus 30 ml (3/4 cup plus 2 tbsp) currants
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) brandy
- Scant 500 ml (2 cups) all-purpose flour
- 7 ml (1 1/2 tsp) best-quality cocoa powder
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) baking powder
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) baking soda
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) each ground cinnamon, allspice, ginger and nutmeg
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) salt
- 150 g (5 oz) good-quality dark chocolate, coarsely grated
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, room temperature
- 150 ml (2/3 cup) superfine sugar
- 5 ml (1 tsp) vanilla extract
- 2 ml (1/2 tsp) each grated lemon zest and grated orange zest
- 1/2 large free-range egg
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) diced candied citrus peel

Glaze

- 45 ml (3 tbsp) freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 325 ml (1 1/3 cups) icing sugar

Cookbook of the Week

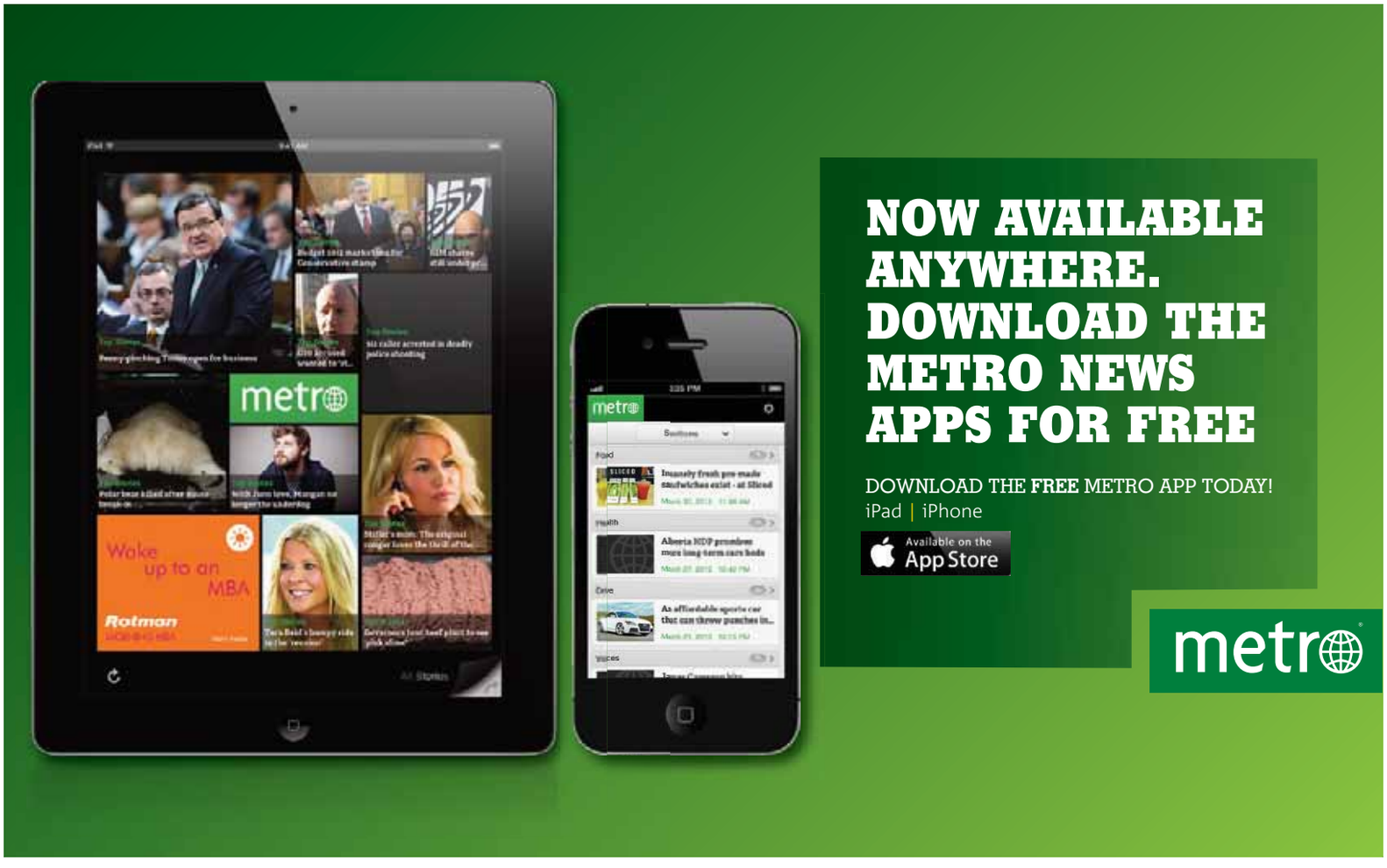
Unique food and city



For the book Jerusalem: A Cookbook, Yotam Ottolenghi teams up with his friend and co-owner of his restaurants, Sami Tamimi. Both men were born in Jerusalem in the same year: Tamimi on the Arab east side and Ottolenghi in the Jewish west.

In this book, they explore the cuisine of their home city and present a collection of recipes that reflects a melting pot of Muslim, Jewish, Arab, Christian and Armenian communities.

Among the recipes are: Seafood and Fennel Soup, Kofta B'Siniyah, Sweet Filo Cigars and more. **METRO**



Gingerbread Cake ushers in the holiday baking season

There is no subtle way to say this. This cake screams Christmas.

To start with, it's gingerbread, the aroma alone of which is embedded in the definition of this holiday. That aroma, of course, is paired with an ultra-rich, moist cake that is at once dense, but also light. Then there is the sugar crisp caramelized sides of the cake, which only add to the tender, sweet lemony pear slices that crown the cake.

Pair this cake with a mug of hot cocoa, coffee or (to be totally indulgent) a frothy glass of eggnog.

Ingredients

- Zest and juice of 2 lemons
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 3/4 cup packed light brown sugar, divided
- 3 large pears, peeled, cored and sliced
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup molasses
- 1 tbsp dry ground ginger
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cardamom
- 1/2 tsp ground allspice
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 2/3 cups all-purpose flour

1. In a skillet over low heat, combine the lemon juice and zest with the wine and 1/2 cup of the brown sugar. Add the pears and bring to a slow simmer. Cook for 10 minutes, or until the pears are just tender. Remove from the heat and gently stir in the raisins.

2. Heat the oven to 350 F. Spray a tube pan with baking spray. Sprinkle the remaining 1/4 cup brown sugar in the bottom of the pan. Arrange the pears, slightly overlapping, over the sugar.

3. In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer to beat together the butter, granulated sugar, molasses, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, allspice, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add the eggs, one at a time, scraping the bowl between additions. Add half the milk followed by half of the flour, mixing before adding the remaining half the milk and flour. Spoon into the prepared pan over the pears.

4. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted at the centre comes out clean. Allow to cool for 15 minutes in the pan, then place a large overturned plate or platter over the cake. Invert the cake so it is standing on the plate. If any of the pears stick to the pan, carefully remove them and return them to their place on the cake.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This recipe serves 16. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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- **Pricing.** From $300,000 to $1,500,000

The project overview

The first of three modern condominium towers is located inside of The Distillery Historic District. The project boasts spectacular views in all directions, clean, critically-acclaimed architecture and an entirely unique neighbourhood environment.

Location and transit

A central location with growing transit options. Located adjacent to King Street, Lakeshore Boulevard and the Gardiner Expressway, residents have easy access to everywhere in the city. TTC options include the King streetcar and the 65A Parliament bus.

In the neighbourhood

This 13-acre pedestrian friendly site is home to a wide variety of independent and award-winning boutiques, galleries, restaurants and cafés. Noteworthy shops include Soma Chocolates, The Mill Street Brewery, Balzacs Coffee and Got Style.

Building amenities

While the residents consider the whole Distillery District an amenity, the building itself offers a boutique hotel lifestyle with amenities such as the super-popular outdoor pool and hot tub, event room and fitness facility.

Five-year mortgage rates

FIXED		VARIABLE
5.24%	BMO	3.10%
5.24%	CIBC	3.20%
5.24%	HSBC	3.10%
3.44%	ICICI	3.00%
3.09%	ING	3.00%
5.24%	RBC	3.20%
4.99%	SCOTIA	3.10%
5.24%	TD	3.20%
5.24%	NATIONAL	3.20%
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Rooftop Surfing

Vegas awaits

BRYAN TUCKEY
President and CEO of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (BILD) can be found at twitter.com/bildgta), (facebook.com/bildgta), and bildblogs.ca.

I was impressed to learn that a number of BILD members were finalists at the upcoming National Sales and Marketing Awards in Las Vegas. It should be expected, as the GTA is one of the fastest-growing regions in North America.

Even my expectations were exceeded, however, when I saw a short-list featuring 52 entries from the GTA in the 53 available categories.

Now in its 32nd year, National Sales and Marketing Awards — better known as the Nationals — pay tribute to superior sales and marketing achievements by individual professionals, homebuilders and associates and sales and marketing councils. It is the largest such competition in the United States, and entries are judged by diverse panel of industry experts over a three-day period.

While American builders and projects usually enjoy home-court advantage in this international competition, recent years have observed an increased Canadian presence. This year was no exception.

Leading the way for BILD members, Signature Developments and Zancor Homes each received four spots on the finalist roster — both for their condominium projects in Richmond Hill.

Signature's Tao Condos is up in the best direct mail, best internet marketing campaign and best international marketing campaign categories, and will compete with Zancor's Xpression Condos for best brochure.

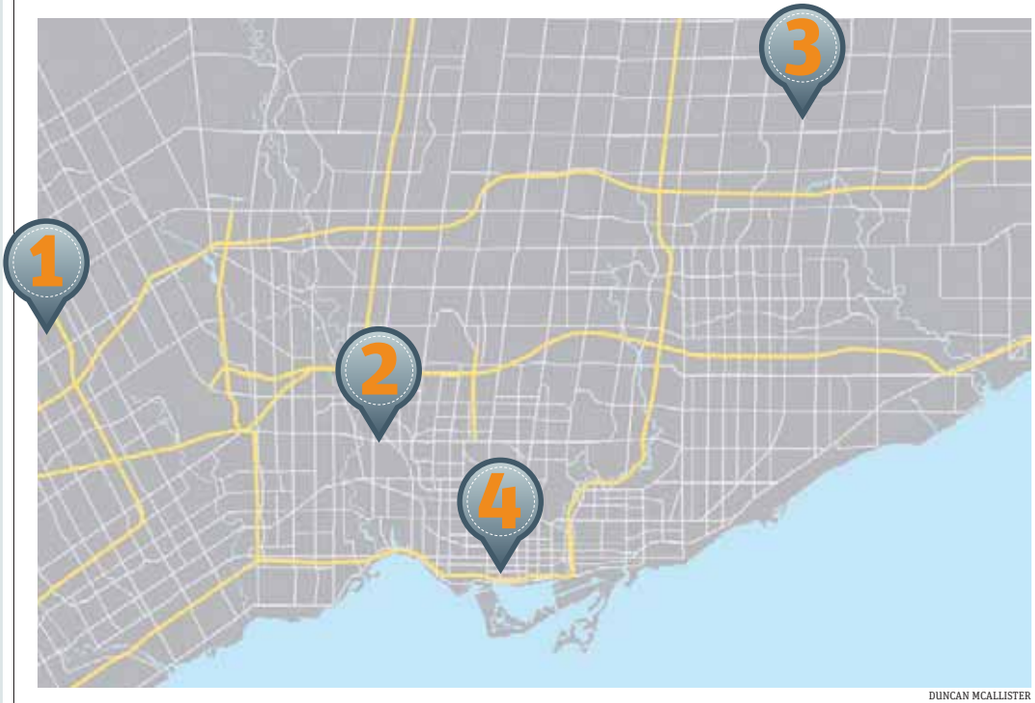
Xpression is also fighting for top honours in best social media campaign, best color ad and best interior merchandising of a model under 1,500 square feet. Marketing for both projects is credited to Blackjet Inc.

BILD member Montana Steele Advertising is once again the leading GTA-based ad agency this year, having played a part in 28 of the 52 finalist spots. I am very proud to announce that BILD is once again nominated for a Building Industry Community Spirit Award for its fundraising efforts in the annual Charity BBQ and Race for Humanity. The events combined for more than $36,000, which was donated to our community partner Habitat for Humanity Toronto.

We will be competing against BILD members Decorenza and Sun-Bite Drapery in this category. These two companies have been the driving force behind Hats on for Awareness, a charitable organization committed to raising awareness about mental illness in support of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

I wish them the best of luck because the real winners are the people that have benefited from the charitable outreach of our industry. Winners will be announced on Jan. 22 in Las Vegas.

What's hot on the condo market



DUNCAN MCALLISTER

1. Brampton

Sales Centre Grand Opening: Mount Pleasant Creditview and Bovaird, 9806 James Potter Rd., Brampton. Dec. 8 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

CONTACT: CALL 416-679-8466 OR VISIT GREATGULF.COM

2. West Toronto

Open House: Perspective Condos, head over to 25 Fortenay Ct, Dec. 9 from 1 to 3 p.m.

CONTACT: CALL 416-242-3500 OR VISIT PIANOSI.COM

3. Markham

Grand Opening: Victoria Manor, 16th Avenue, one block east of McCowan Road, Markham. Dec. 8 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.,

CONTACT: VISIT FIELDGATEHOMES.COM

4. Downtown

Open House: Waterfront downtown condo, two bedrooms, one bathroom, 550 Front St. W., Dec. 8 from 2 to 4 p.m.

CONTACT: CALL 416-849-5360

Noise driving you crazy? Welcome to Toronto

Construction is one of the most common disruptions for condo dwellers. ISTOCK

Condo trends. City living has its downfalls — how do you deal with noise?

CONDO TRENDS
Duncan McAllister
life@metronews.ca

One of the by-products of living in a highly intensified and vibrant urban society is noise. Noise in a condo may have multiple sources, both internal to the building and external. Each person has their own tolerance level in terms of how much noise they're willing to endure.

Some of the most frustrating sources of noise can be your neighbours. In any civilized society, and a condo building is a microcosm of a society, there is a certain standard of acceptable behaviour. Regrettably, a number of Toronto condo dwellers miss the mark in terms of consideration for their neighbours.

Conventional wisdom says that it should be quiet in the morning and that loud music and revelling should cease by 11:00 p.m. In condo and rental parlance, this is the law of reasonable enjoyment. It is every person's right to live in a reasonably quiet environment.

Ironically, the loudest and most disruptive noise source for condo dwellers is, well, condo construction. In downtown Toronto, it's not unusual to live in a building surrounded by three or four new condo construction sites.

So what can you do? The bad news is, not much, although you are afforded a certain amount of protection under the law. According to the City of Toronto website, late night partying and yelling are handled by the police. Barking dogs are handled by animal services.

The Residential Tenancies Act maintains that renters are entitled to "reasonable enjoyment" within their own units. At the same time, landlords are allowed to conduct improvements and construction on their buildings.

The City of Toronto Municipal Code, "permits operation of construction equipment during Monday to Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., and no construction noise on Sundays and statutory holidays."

In terms of soundproofing, some units are constructed better than others. The problem is that cement slab carries sound a long way, and even a pin drop can be heard several floors away. Most new condos have modern windows that go a long way to isolate you from excessive street noise. But it's the noise from within the building that is harder to control.

Beware of older high-rises that are being upgraded. Anything that involves jackhammers and concrete is going to be rough. And in a high-rise with many floors, it may go on for a better part of a year or more.

Condo noise busters checklist

Before purchasing your unit, look for the following potential noise sources that may be difficult or impossible to control once you've moved in.

- **Wild parties.** This can be hard to pinpoint. Even high-end condos have their share of late-night revellers.
- **Barking dogs.** Not fair to the animal, not fair to the neighbours.
- **Construction.** Look for condo or commercial projects in close proximity to your building.
- **Unit next to the elevator shaft or garbage chute.** This will be a constant source of mechanical noise.
- **A building that's built over the subway line.** Lower floors will constantly feel the rumble of subways.
- **Parking lot outside your window.** If you like the sound of car alarms, then this is your unit.
- **Proximity to airport runways or train tracks.** This will be an ongoing source of noise.

Property law

Condo special assessments

I am in the process of purchasing a condo and one of the components of the due diligence we complete is to have my lawyer review the status certificate. When she did so, she uncovered that the board of directors had issued a special assessment against the condominium as a whole. What does this mean and how will it affect my purchase?

LEGAL MATTERS
Jeffrey Cowan
home@metronews.ca

When a condo board issues a special assessment, it is usually to make up for a shortfall in the reserve fund. This fund is used to maintain the common elements of the building and saves for a rainy day, for such large repairs as a new roof or work on the parking garage.

In your case, the board would have determined the amount that the building as a whole needed to bring the reserve fund back into line and then provided a notice to each owner what their proportionate contribution would be.

These payments are usually made in installments and could easily extend beyond your closing date.

Therefore, your lawyer should determine what installments still need to be made and this amount should be deducted from the purchase price or adjusted for on closing. Either way, because it was a charge that was declared before you took ownership, it should be the responsibility of the current owner.

Follow Jeff Cowan on Twitter @Cowan_Law or on the website at cowanlaw.ca

DIY DECOR TIP: FESTIVE LAUREL LEAF WREATH

STEVEN AND CHRIS RETURN WITH NEW EPISODES JAN. 7 ON CBC. THEIR ROSTER OF EXPERTS DELIVER IDEAS AND ADVICE ON TOPICS INCLUDING HOME DECOR, FOOD AND ENTERTAINING, HEALTH AND FITNESS AND MORE.

Don't let your front entry experience the winter blues. Jazz it up with this beautiful and inexpensive DIY wreath.

Directions

1. Using wire cutters, cut the metal frame on wreath and remove the support from one end.

2. Bend metal frame to achieve a laurel-leaf shape.

3. To create the bow, fold one sheet of moss in half horizontally and glue together so you're left with a long skinny strip of double-sided moss. From there, loop each end into the middle and secure with a second, thinner piece of moss. Finally, attach tails for bow with hot glue.

4. Add extra sprigs of pine from your bundle to fill in any bare holes or blank spots. You will need to use wire to secure the pieces to the wreath.

5. Secure bow and accents to bottom of laurel leaf. Decorate with ornaments to complete the look.

Materials

- Wire cutters
- Prefabricated pine wreath
- 2 moss sheets
- Hot-glue gun
- Pine bundle
- Wire
- Decorative accents (pine cones, magnolia leaves, etc.)
- Traditional holiday ornaments

Just imagine this hanging on your front door. SUBMITTED

Pinterest inspiring Canadian holiday decor

Canadians are grabbing their scissors and glue guns this holiday season to deck the halls with homemade decorations.

And some are pointing to Pinterest as the inspiration for their decorations and attempts to save a few dollars by crafting their own do-it-yourself gifts.

A quick search on the popular image-sharing social network hails hundreds of DIY ideas. From Christmas wreaths made by gluing ornaments onto a repurposed and rounded clothes hanger, to cutting and securing cupcake liners onto the bulbs of Christmas tree lights, there's a wealth of creativity on display.

Rachel Smith's Halifax-area home is brimming with decor she's handcrafted over the years. But lately, Smith finds herself tabbing through Pinterest's DIY and crafts sections.

"They give you so many more ideas, things I never thought of," she said.

Whether it be Christmas decorations or gifts, Smith said the thrill of telling someone that you created the craft yourself is "so much more exciting."

"You feel proud of yourself ... and it's not as expensive," she said, adding that she recently painted festive light bulbs to use as ornaments.

"I think people appreciate handmade things sometimes a little bit more."

Paula Jones, a Canadian spokeswoman for the Craft and Hobby Association, said more people are flocking to craft stores in search of supplies for holiday crafts they first saw on Pinterest.

"Pinterest is really giving us a lot more easy access to different ideas," said Jones, whose association represents more than 250 Canadian businesses in the craft industry.

"From what I'm hearing from our members, certainly a lot more people are out there buying products to create Christmas decor in their homes and as gifts.

"People are looking for something more personal to give and to express themselves in their home."

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Black and gold trending for 2013

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Get advice from any old-school interior designer and they'll all give you the same rule: Every room needs a bit of black. The sharp contrast that black offers helps any room come to life. For a long time we've been getting that contrast with very dark brown, but look out for black. While we haven't seen it since the early '80s, it's on its way back in home decor.

Black's revival came out of the very dark brown tones commonly used as well as out of the popularity of grey over the past few years. From fashion to home decoration, grey has become a staple in our lives, outshining the taupe and beige scene. That grey is now darkening itself into its truest form — black.

Metallic colours have predominately been cool tones like silver and nickel. Now things are warming up with champagne (a half-silver, half-gold mix) for contemporary homes and old brushed brass for traditional homes. The metallics have certainly heated up and any warm, golden tone will be hot for 2013.

Used in small spaces or large spaces

You might not think such a dramatic, dark colour like black would work in a small space, but if you're consistent with your tones, then any colour can work. Black adds a sense of drama and sophistication to a room and if you usually use your space at night, why not consider black as a main element.

Try to keep a balance

When mixing the black and gold colour combination in a modern space, use 70 per cent black and 30 per cent gold.

In more traditional settings, flip the coin and use 70 per cent gold tones and 30 per cent black to sharpen things up. Funny, the 70/30 rule applies to a lot of great design rules.

Organic hammered oval Angenam bowl

Hold the predictable fruit and nuts or a single candle for a golden illumination. $20, ikea.ca.

Floor-to-ceiling style

Black floors, door frames and bookcases create a dramatic statement. ralphlaurenhome.com.

Lassalle Vanity

Grand scale goes invisible with an all black vanity or desk. $2,500, crateandbarrel.com.

Gold pig bookends

From snout to tail, your books will be sandwiched in style. $35, cb2.com.

Desire Gold wallpaper

Add some deco glamour to your walls. $80/roll, grahambrown.com.

Classic Chambord French coffee press

Serve up morning coffee in style. $70, anthropologie.com.

Exotica Cheetah 4-x-6 pelt

The classic animal print is hand made of wool. $185, ecarpetgallery.com.

Hakkari Hurricane lamps

Harness nature's warm glow. From $32, crateandbarrel.com.

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Gift wrapping everywhere! Pack presents the green way

What are greener alternatives to paper when wrapping gifts?

QUEEN OF GREEN
Tovah Paglaro
green@metronews.ca

The presents have been opened, the kids are playing happily and you start stuffing all that wrapping paper into a recycling bag. Sure, it beats a garbage bag, but you know you could do even better.

Just look at those lovely kids — taking the extra step is the greatest gift you can give them.

Fabric wrap

Wrapping gifts with festive fabric is my favourite sustainable option! Keep it simple by purchasing beautifully made bags and accessories from small retailers or get crafty and make your own.

Folding fabric as gift wrap is also pretty simple and the end results can be spectacular. Whether you're giving wine, flowers, a box or some irregular shaped delight, you'll appreciate the step-by-step folding tutorials at furoshiki.com.

Get creative

Who says that gifts need to wrapped in wrapping? A boxed item can be wrapped in a scarf. Tea towels can hide wine bottles. And socks stuffed into a paper towel roller make for a fun surprise.

Maybe the kids in your house would enjoy making their own wrapping? Large bolts of cloth can be decorated with fabric paint and reused year after year. Gifts in cardboard boxes are already wrapped — just unleash the children's creativity directly on the box.

Post-consumer wrap

If you are going to wrap a gift in paper, look for wrap that is printed on 100 per cent recycled paper, with a high post-consumer percentage. Paper should be processed chlorine-free and printed with vegetable-based ink.

Bows and buttons

It's not just the paper that causes problems.

Those bows and ribbons are a mysterious assortment of plastic, making them difficult to recycle at the end of their life. It also takes a lot of resources to produce and ship them.

Try making your own gift wrap out of festive fabric. ISTOCK IMAGES

Obviously, reuse the ones you have on hand. But once they've been used up, replace them with fabric ribbon and buttons. Or take your inspiration from nature and decorate with felt, pinecones, pressed flowers and other bits or beauty located in your backyard.

It can be fun to make your own gift tags and decorations, but if crafty isn't your thing, turn to Etsy or your local holiday market. There are lots of artisans who'll appreciate your green holiday buying power.

Have questions for the Queen of Green? Write to tpaglaro@davidsuzuki.org or tweet @DavidSuzukiQoG

Christmas dinner

Keeping dinner hot and ready

How does the Butler keep a Christmas dinner hot for the fancy people you work for? I just want to keep it warm for my family to make my life easier.
— Anxious Holiday Cook

CHARLES THE BUTLER
askcharlesthebutler@metronews.ca
For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Dear Anxious Holiday Cook:

That's a great question considering all the money and work that goes into preparing Christmas dinner.

So what is this great secret? Well, timing is one of the most important issues when cooking in the kitchen. You ideally want as much of your meal to be ready at the same time, but chefs (and Butlers) still have another trick up our sleeves. It's called "a Bain Marie" — a fancy French term for water bath or double boiler.

So how does this relate to your question? Well, when chefs make certain foods like mashed potatoes and gravy — or meat — they may put the pot into a hot water bath. This keeps them perfectly hot, moist and ready to serve without cooking them further.

There's a lot of work and preparation that goes into Christmas dinner. ISTOCK IMAGES

You can cover the pot or container you are going to put in the hot water bath with saran wrap. The water bath allows you to hold the items at a hot temperature so that you can serve them all at the same time.

Although you can go much longer, I don't keep food in the pots for longer than 30 to 40 minutes.

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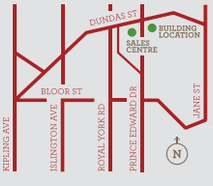
The holidays are here, and so are the delicious treats. Buy at The Epicurean and live at the centre of everything foodie. Located at the corner of Dundas and Prince Edward in South Kingsway, The Epicurean is home to the best foodie-inspired amenities like the Chef's Table Demo Kitchen. Get ready to indulge this holiday season.



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Monarch

Sober holiday thoughts

Stats. Impaired driving is leading criminal cause of death in Canada, OPP says

If you are likely to consume alcohol at a party during the holidays, don't take your vehicle. ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

It doesn't seem to matter how often we talk about the dangers of drinking and driving. Someone, somewhere, isn't listening.

According to statistics provided by the Ontario Provincial Police, impaired driving is the leading criminal cause of death in Canada. And, sadly, arrests for impaired driving hit a year-long peak during the final weeks of the year.

For those who haven't noticed, the penalties for drinking and driving are considerably tougher, thanks to groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Even for first-time offenders, defending a drunk-driving arrest is expensive.

"Everyone recognizes that the holiday season is a great time to reconnect with family and friends and celebrate with a few drinks," said Mauro Convertini, insurance expert at Aviva Canada. "It's important, though, to have a plan in place to get yourself and your loved ones home safely."

Convertini offers some simple tips to ensure a safe and happy holiday season:

• Plan ahead: If you are likely to consume alcohol at an event or party, don't take your vehicle.

• Use a designated driver: Remember, the "least impaired" person in the room is not a designated driver.

• Use public transit: If this is not an option, make arrangements to spend the night if you are visiting a friend.

• Use a taxi or limousine service: There are more than 35,000 operating in Canada.

By following these sobering safety tips, let's hope Canadians responsibly enjoy the best of the holiday season and the year ahead.

NEWS CANADA

Plan ahead for the perfect party

When planning a party during the festive season, there are many things to consider. From the music and food, to the guest list and atmosphere, setting the right tone to make a memorable night can be exhausting.

One of the most important things to remember is that you are responsible for the safety of your guests while they are in your home.

Planning ahead can ensure a memorable and safe night for everyone and make your party the highlight of the holiday season.

Here are a few planning ideas courtesy of Labatt Breweries of Canada. Your guests will thank you.

• Always serve food: Throughout the night, make available food that has carbohydrates, protein and fat, as these slow down the absorption of alcohol. Be sure to serve late-night snacks as well.

• B.Y.O.P.Js.: Bring your own pyjamas. Before the party starts, prepare bedding, pillows, and towels and invite guests ahead of time to stay overnight.

• Let's make a deal: Make a plan to help guests get home safely, whether arranging a set fee with a local cab company to shuttle your guests to and from the party, or renting a mini bus and charging $5 a head for a safe ride home.

• Give a gift in return: Provide guests with transit fare or subway tokens when they leave for the night.

• Have backup: Have a trusted friend as a co-host to help manage difficult situations.

• Offer a choice of drinks: In addition to water, juice and soft drinks, try non-alcoholic beers. Popular choices include Beck's Non-Alcoholic beer and Labatt Blue DeAlcoholized.

More party planning tips including recipes and festive ideas can be found online at makeaplan.ca.

NEWS CANADA

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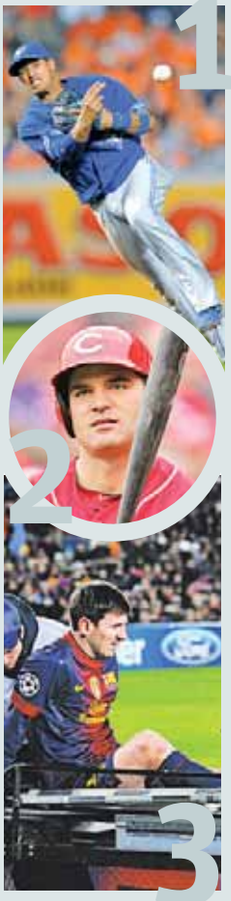
4 SPORTS

Sports in pictures



1 MLB. Marlins send Escobar to Tampa Bay

Yunel Escobar's stay with the Miami Marlins lasted all of two weeks. The payroll-slashing Marlins dealt the shortstop and his $5-million salary across Florida to the Tampa Bay Rays on Tuesday night for infielder Derek Dietrich. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

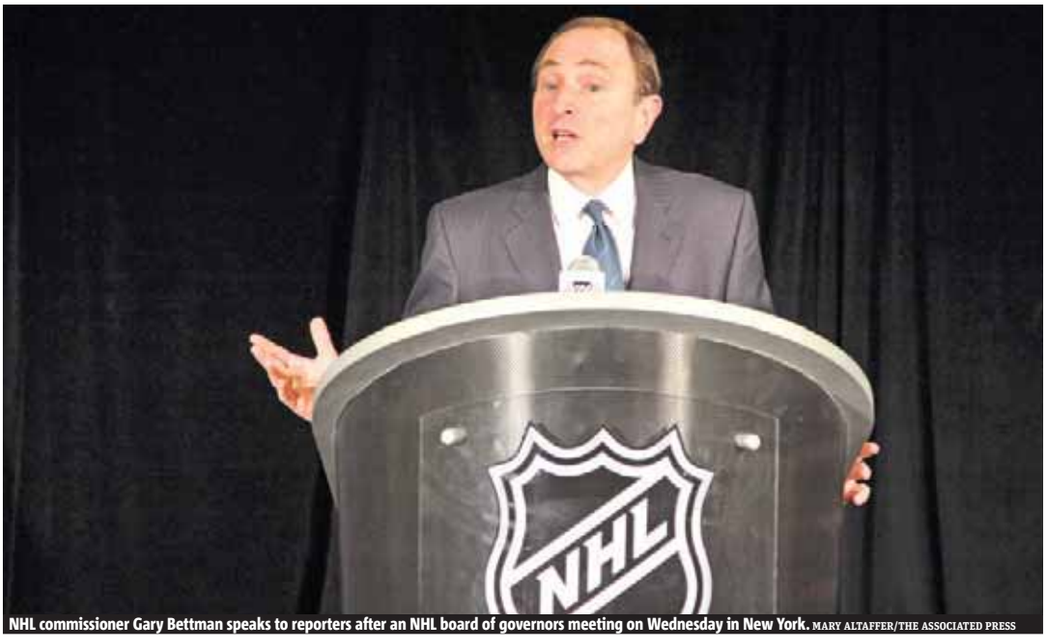
2 MLB. Votto gets another O'Neill honour

Cincinnati Reds slugger Joey Votto is the winner of the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame's Tip O'Neill Award for the third straight year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

3 Soccer. Messi hobbled in Barca's draw

Lionel Messi was carried off with a knee injury as Barcelona was held to 0-0 by Benfica in the Champions League on Wednesday.

The club said the initial assessment was Messi had an outer bruise to his left knee. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



NHL commissioner Gary Bettman speaks to reporters after an NHL board of governors meeting on Wednesday in New York. MARY ALTAFFER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lockout talks gain steam in Gotham

Day 81. Sense of urgency increases as sides try to strike deal

A wave of optimism gave way to tension as the NHL and NHL Players' Association spent a second straight day trying to hammer out a collective bargaining agreement.

The sides exchanged proposals during a series of brief meetings on Wednesday afternoon, according to sources, in a bid to close the final gap in negotiations that have spanned more than five months.

The urgency was evident as a group of six league owners shuffled between internal meetings and short sessions with players and union staff at a hotel in midtown Manhattan.

By the numbers

50

According to sources, the owners are discussing a possible 50-game season. They felt a 60-game schedule was too ambitious given the current timeline.

At one point, Boston Bruins owner Jeremy Jacobs could be seen having an animated conversation with deputy commissioner Bill Daly outside the negotiating room. Meantime, players paced the halls while speaking on their cellphones.

Even though the specific details of the new offers weren't known, one aspect revealed another hurdle the sides have to cross — the length of the deal. The league's proposal called for a 10-year term while the NHLPA continued to favour a shorter contract, according to sources.

With tensions rising, commissioner Gary Bettman and NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr kept themselves out of negotiation sessions for a second straight day. However, Bettman did provide a brief update to reporters after a two-hour gathering of the board of governors, saying he was "pleased" with how things were progressing.

That was about all he was willing to reveal.

"We are pleased with the process that is ongoing and out of respect for that process I don't have anything else to say and I'm not going to take any questions," said Bettman.

The two sides have cleared their schedules for the rest of the week after successfully getting an adjournment from Quebec Labour Board hearings that had been scheduled in Montreal for Thursday and Friday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Splitting the pie

Both the league and union proposed a 50-50 revenue split last month, but they remain separated on payments to be made outside the system to help ease the transition from the previous deal, which saw the players receive 57 per cent.

- The NHL has offered $211 million in deferred compensations while the union is asking for $393 million.

NFL. Private service memorializes Belcher

Several players for the Kansas City Chiefs attended a memorial service for teammate Jovan Belcher, who killed his girlfriend and then fatally shot himself in the head.

Retired Chiefs Hall of Famer Bobby Bell said after the private hour-long service that general manager Scott Pioli, who witnessed Belcher's suicide on Saturday, spoke during the service. Bell said an uncle of Belcher also spoke.

Several Chiefs players declined comment after the service. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chiefs quarterbacks Brady Quinn, left, and Matt Cassel leave a memorial service for teammate Jovan Belcher on Wednesday in Kansas City, Mo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Doping. Four athletes stripped of Athens medals

Eight years after winning Olympic medals in Athens, four track and field athletes from eastern Europe were ordered to hand them back Wednesday because of positive doping tests, while Lance Armstrong can hold on to his bronze medal from the 2000 Sydney Games a little while longer.

The International Olympic Committee executive board disqualified four athletes whose 2004 Athens doping samples were retested this year and came back positive for steroids, including shot put gold medallist Yuriy Bilonog of Ukraine.

Also stripped of medals were hammer throw silver medallist Ivan Tskikhan of Belarus and two bronze medallists — women's shot putter Svetlana Krivelyova of Russia and discus thrower Irina Yatchenko of Belarus.

The IOC held off stripping Armstrong of the bronze he won 12 years ago in the cycling road time trial in Sydney, citing procedural reasons for the delay. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Can't knock his hustle

Raptors forward Amir Johnson, left, puts up a shot against Jermaine O'Neal of the Phoenix Suns in Toronto last Friday. Johnson prides himself on providing a spark off the bench. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA. Johnson relishes role as an 'energy guy' coming off the Raptors' bench

It's so easy everyone should do it and that they don't mystifies Amir Johnson.

NBA backups are generally asked to do one thing above all else when they get on the floor — play with energy and effort and get the game going at something approaching a frenetic pace.

It's what Johnson prides himself on, he says, and he thinks it's odd that others don't always follow suit.

It's not that he was calling out teammates or even NBA opponents, it's just that he figures if that's the job, do it.

"For me, that's how I play, that's actually how I score the ball," Johnson said before the Raptors faced the Kings in Sacramento Wednesday night. "It's not actually running plays, it's the little stuff, the hustle stuff. If I'm open, I'll shoot the ball, but that's what I do."

For the Raptors, however, that spark has been far from consistent; Johnson and Ed Davis, the two backup big men who are the bench energy players on the roster, have had many nights where they have boosted the energy level but it's not been often that they've done it in tandem.

"When you come in, you're supposed to be energy guys," said Johnson. "Back in Detroit, they used to call us the Zoo Crew. We were the guys who actually messed up stuff, come in and give a little energy. That's always been my mindset."

It can be as little as diving for loose balls or doing something out of the ordinary. Johnson's "messed up stuff" description is wide-ranging.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"That's what every player should do when they come off the bench. When they see their team is down, I mean somebody needs to give them a spark."

Amir Johnson

Go to metronews.ca for coverage of Wednesday's game in Sacramento.

Tom Cheek. Longtime Jays broadcaster wins 2013 Ford C. Frick Award

Tom Cheek, the original and longtime voice of the Toronto Blue Jays, has been awarded the 2013 Ford C. Frick Award for broadcasting excellence by the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Cheek, who died in 2005, called the first 4,306 regular-season and 41 post-season games in Blue Jays history, beginning with Toronto's inaugural season in 1977.

His widow, Shirley Cheek, thanked all the friends and family members who had worked so hard to get people to vote for him. Cheek has been one of the 10 finalists for the Frick Award every year starting in 2005.

She said she was sitting in her doctor's office when the call came from Hall of Fame president Jeff Idelson. Her doctor was the first to find out that their campaign had finally succeeded.

As for what her late husband would have said, she related a little speech she just gave to the Vermont Association of Broadcasters, who inducted him into their Hall of Fame and said at the time he should be in Cooperstown.

"I said to them, first of all, if this was Tom, he would get before you and say, 'There are so many people more deserving than I.'

"The same thing with Cooperstown, if he ever gets in ... I said, 'I for one feel that Tom deserves to be there.'"

His call of Joe Carter's championship-winning home run in the 1993 World Series — "Touch 'em all Joe! You'll never hit a bigger home run in your life." — highlighted a career that saw Cheek chronicle the Jays' rise from struggling expansion team to back-to-back world champions.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tom Cheek was awarded the Ford C. Frick Award for excellence in baseball broadcasting on Wednesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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NBA

EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	12	4	.750	—
Miami	12	4	.750	—
Brooklyn	11	6	.647	1½
Chicago	8	8	.500	4
Atlanta	9	5	.643	2
Philadelphia	10	8	.556	3
Boston	9	8	.529	3½
Indiana	10	9	.526	3½
Milwaukee	8	8	.500	4
Charlotte	7	9	.438	5
Orlando	7	10	.412	5½
Detroit	6	13	.316	7½
Cleveland	4	14	.222	9
Toronto	4	14	.222	9
Washington	2	13	.133	9½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Memphis	13	3	.813	½
Oklahoma City	15	4	.789	—
San Antonio	14	4	.778	½
L.A. Clippers	11	6	.647	3
Golden State	10	7	.588	4
Houston	9	8	.529	5
Denver	9	9	.500	5½
Minnesota	8	8	.500	5½
Utah	9	10	.474	6
Dallas	8	9	.471	6
L.A. Lakers	8	10	.444	6½
Portland	8	11	.421	7
Phoenix	7	12	.368	8
New Orleans	5	11	.313	8½
Sacramento	4	12	.250	9½

Division leaders ranked in top four positions and best eight teams qualify for playoffs

Wednesday's results

Indiana 99 Portland 92
New York at Charlotte
Minnesota at Boston
Golden State at Detroit
Denver at Atlanta
L.A. Lakers at New Orleans
Chicago at Cleveland
Milwaukee at San Antonio
Orlando at Utah
Toronto at Sacramento
Dallas at L.A. Clippers

Tuesday's results

Minnesota 105 Philadelphia 88
Washington 105 Miami 101
Oklahoma City 117 Brooklyn 111
Houston 107 L.A. Lakers 105
Memphis 108 Phoenix 98 (OT)
Indiana 80 Chicago 76

Thursday's games — All Times Eastern

New York at Miami, 8 p.m.
Dallas at Phoenix, 10:30 p.m.

Friday's games

Denver at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Boston at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Golden State at Brooklyn, 7:30 p.m.
Chicago at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.
Washington at Atlanta, 7:30 p.m.
Cleveland at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
Memphis at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Charlotte at Milwaukee, 8:30 p.m.
Houston at San Antonio, 8:30 p.m.
Toronto at Utah, 9 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Oklahoma City, 9:30 p.m.
Orlando at Sacramento, 10 p.m.

SCORING LEADERS

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Bryant, LAL	18	169	131	503	27.9
Anthony, NYK	16	147	94	425	26.6
Durant, Okl	19	162	149	503	26.5
James, Mia	16	158	59	397	24.8
Harden, Hou	17	120	130	401	23.6
Westbrook, Okl	19	143	84	397	20.9
Aldridge, Por	17	145	64	354	20.8
Mayo, Dal	17	119	56	343	20.2
Bosh, Mia	16	112	82	309	19.3
Pierce, Bos	17	102	92	326	19.2
Lillard, Por	18	117	65	343	19.1
Curry, GoS	17	110	59	322	18.9
Duncan, SA	17	129	62	322	18.9
Gay, Mem	16	113	52	297	18.6
Howard, LAL	18	119	95	334	18.6
Ellis, Mil	16	114	58	298	18.6
DeRozan, Tor	18	124	74	331	18.4
Holiday, Phi	18	127	53	327	18.2
Parker, SA	16	121	41	289	18.1
Deng, Chi	16	109	55	288	18.0
Randolph, Mem	16	110	63	283	17.7
Batum, Por	18	107	56	317	17.6
Crawford, LAC	17	98	69	300	17.6
Griffin, LAC	17	122	53	297	17.5
Anderson, NO	16	105	18	280	17.5
Lee, GoS	17	123	50	296	17.4
Bargnani, Tor	17	110	48	295	17.4
West, Ind	18	126	60	312	17.3
Jennings, Mil	16	105	32	272	17.0
Jefferson, Uta	19	136	44	317	16.7
Walker, Cha	16	97	59	266	16.6
Williams, Bro	17	91	70	279	16.4
Paul, LAC	17	97	66	276	16.2
Afflalo, Orl	17	106	39	274	16.1
Smith, Atl	13	91	22	209	16.1
Cousins, Sac	14	90	43	224	16.0
Matthews, Por	18	100	48	287	15.9
Horford, Atl	13	92	23	207	15.9
Davis, Orl	17	112	45	269	15.8
Parsons, Hou	16	93	29	252	15.8
Gasol, Mem	16	91	70	252	15.8
Monroe, Det	19	119	60	298	15.7
Johnson, Bro	17	102	32	266	15.6
Garnett, Bos	17	106	53	265	15.6
Martin, Okl	19	88	79	297	15.6
Sessions, Cha	16	79	85	250	15.6
Gallinari, Den	17	89	59	264	15.5
Dragic, Pho	19	103	57	294	15.5
Thompson, GoS	17	98	28	261	15.4
Varejao, Cle	17	105	49	259	15.2

Not including last night's games

GOLF

DUBAI LADIES MASTERS

At Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Par 72 (35-37)
First Round

Shanshan Feng, China	32-34—66
Florentyna Parker, England	32-34—66
Klara Spilkova, Czech Republic	33-34—67
Sahra Hassan, Wales	31-36—67
Cindy Lacrosse, United States	31-36—67
Nontaya Srisawang, Thailand	34-34—68
Lorie Kane, Charlottetown	**33-35—68**
Ashleigh Simon, South Africa	33-35—68
Anne-Lise Caudal, France	34-34—68
Felicity Johnson, England	35-33—68
Lydia Hall, Wales	33-35—68
Caroline Masson, Germany	35-33—68
Gwladys Nocera, France	32-36—68
Yu Yang Zhang, China	31-38—69
Becky Morgan, Wales	33-36—69
Line Vedel, Denmark	33-36—69
Stacy Lee Bregman, South Africa	36-33—69
Dewi Claire Schreefel, Netherlands	35-34—69
Valentine Derrey, France	34-35—69
Bree Arthur, Australia	35-34—69
Elizabeth Bennett, England	35-34—69

SOCCER

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

FIRST ROUND

(home teams listed first)
x — advanced to second round
Wednesday's results

GROUP E

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Juventus	6	3	3	0	12	4	12
x-Shaktar Donetsk	6	3	1	2	12	8	10
Chelsea	6	3	1	2	16	10	10
Nordsjaelland	6	0	1	5	4	22	1

Chelsea (England) 6 Nordsjaelland (Denmark) 1
Shaktar Donetsk (Ukraine) 0 Juventus (Italy) 1

GROUP F

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Bayern Munich	6	4	1	1	15	7	13
x-Valencia	6	4	1	1	12	5	13
BATE Borisov	6	2	0	4	9	15	6
Lille	6	1	0	5	4	13	3

Bayern Munich (Germany) 4 BATE Borisov (Belarus) 1
Lille (France) 0 Valencia (Spain) 1

GROUP G

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Barcelona	6	4	1	1	11	5	13
x-Glasgow Celtic	6	3	1	2	9	8	10
Benfica	6	2	2	2	5	5	8
Spartak Moscow	6	1	0	5	7	14	3

Barcelona (Spain) 0 Benfica (Portugal) 0
Glasgow Celtic (Scotland) 2 Spartak Moscow (Russia) 1

GROUP H

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Manchester Utd	6	4	0	2	9	6	12
x-Galatasaray	6	3	1	2	7	6	10
Cluj	6	3	1	2	9	7	10
Braga	6	1	0	5	7	13	3

Braga (Portugal) 1 Galatasaray (Turkey) 2
Manchester United (England) 0 Cluj (Romania) 1

Tuesday's results

GROUP A

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Paris St-Germain	6	5	0	1	14	3	15
x-Porto	6	4	1	1	10	4	13
Dynamo Kiev	6	1	2	3	6	10	5
Dinamo Zagreb	6	0	1	5	1	14	1

Dinamo Zagreb (Croatia) 1 Dynamo Kiev (Ukraine) 1
Paris Saint-Germain (France) 2 Porto (Portugal) 1

GROUP B

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Schalke	6	3	3	0	10	6	12
x-Arsenal	6	3	1	2	10	8	10
Olimpiakos	6	3	0	3	9	9	9
Montpellier	6	0	2	4	6	12	2

Montpellier (France) 1 Schalke (Germany) 1
Olympiakos (Greece) 2 Arsenal (England) 1

GROUP C

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Malaga	6	3	3	0	12	5	12
x-AC Milan	6	2	2	2	7	6	8
St. Petersburg	6	2	1	3	6	9	7
Anderlecht	6	1	2	3	4	9	4

Malaga (Spain) 2 Anderlecht (Belgium) 2
AC Milan (Italy) 0 Zenit St. Petersburg (Russia) 1

GROUP D

	GP	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
x-Bor. Dortmund	6	4	2	0	11	5	14
x-Real Madrid	6	3	2	1	15	9	11
Ajax	6	1	1	4	8	16	4
Manchester City	6	0	3	3	7	11	3

Borussia Dortmund (Germany) 1 Manchester City (England) 0
Real Madrid (Spain) 4 Ajax (Netherlands) 1

AHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Worcester	21	11	8	1	1	60	65	24
Manchester	21	10	8	2	1	55	53	23
St. John's	22	11	10	0	1	53	60	23
Portland	21	10	9	1	1	67	69	22
Providence	19	9	8	0	2	44	55	20

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Springfield	20	12	4	1	3	70	42	28
Bridgeport	20	10	9	0	1	62	70	21
Connecticut	20	9	9	2	0	63	70	20
Adirondack	20	9	11	0	0	52	60	18
Albany	18	5	8	0	5	40	52	15

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Syracuse	20	13	5	1	1	74	55	28
Binghamton	18	12	4	1	1	57	44	26
W-B/Scranton	20	13	7	0	0	58	46	26
Hershey	21	9	11	1	0	55	62	19
Norfolk	20	9	11	0	0	59	65	18

WESTERN CONFERENCE

NORTH DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Abbotsford	21	13	3	3	2	58	39	31
Toronto	21	12	8	0	1	70	59	25
Lake Erie	22	11	9	1	1	70	70	24
Rochester	19	9	8	2	0	63	59	20
Hamilton	18	7	9	1	1	38	57	16

MIDWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Rockford	22	12	9	0	1	73	67	25
Grand Rapids	19	11	6	1	1	66	58	24
Chicago	20	9	8	2	1	56	62	21
Milwaukee	19	9	8	1	1	54	58	20
Peoria	20	6	10	2	2	47	73	16

SOUTH

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Charlotte	21	12	7	0	2	70	61	26
Oklahoma City	20	11	6	1	2	66	59	25
Houston	20	11	6	1	2	67	59	25
Texas	20	10	8	1	1	51	58	22
San Antonio	21	7	11	0	3	54	65	17

Wednesday's result

Bridgeport at Connecticut
Peoria at Grand Rapids
Texas at Milwaukee
San Antonio at Abbotsford

Tuesday's result

San Antonio 3 Abbotsford 2 (OT)

Thursday's games — All Times Eastern

Lake Erie at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Hershey at Norfolk, 7 p.m.

Friday's games

Lake Erie at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Adirondack at Rochester, 7:05 p.m.
Portland at Binghamton, 7:05 p.m.
Manchester at Providence, 7:05 p.m.
Hershey at W-B/Scranton, 7:05 p.m.
Hamilton at Syracuse, 7:30 p.m.
Springfield at St. John's, 7:30 p.m.
Milwaukee at Rockford, 8:05 p.m.
Grand Rapids at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.
Houston at Texas, 8:30 p.m.

Saturday's games

Bridgeport at Albany, 5 p.m.
Hamilton at Hershey, 7 p.m.
Connecticut at Manchester, 7 p.m.
Syracuse at Adirondack, 7 p.m.
Providence at Worcester, 7 p.m.
Rochester at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Portland at W-B/Scranton, 7:05 p.m.
Norfolk at Binghamton, 7:05 p.m.
Springfield at St. John's, 7:30 p.m.
Peoria at Texas, 8 p.m.
Oklahoma City at San Antonio, 8 p.m.
Chicago at Rockford, 8:05 p.m.

NFL

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

EAST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	9	3	0	.750	430	260
N.Y. Jets	5	7	0	.417	228	296
Miami	5	7	0	.417	227	249
Buffalo	5	7	0	.417	277	337

SOUTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Houston	11	1	0	.917	351	221
Indianapolis	8	4	0	.667	265	306
Tennessee	4	8	0	.333	248	359
Jacksonville	2	10	0	.167	206	342

NORTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	9	3	0	.750	303	242
Pittsburgh	7	5	0	.583	254	230
Cincinnati	7	5	0	.583	302	260
Cleveland	4	8	0	.333	229	265

WEST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Denver	9	3	0	.750	349	244
San Diego	4	8	0	.333	258	257
Oakland	3	9	0	.250	235	376
Kansas City	2	10	0	.167	188	322

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

EAST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	7	5	0	.583	321	243
Washington	6	6	0	.500	312	301
Dallas	6	6	0	.500	280	295
Philadelphia	3	9	0	.250	217	320

SOUTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Atlanta	11	1	0	.917	317	229
Tampa Bay	6	6	0	.500	333	285
New Orleans	5	7	0	.417	321	327
Carolina	3	9	0	.250	235	292

NORTH

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
Green Bay	8	4	0	.667	296	259
Chicago	8	4	0	.667	294	198
Minnesota	6	6	0	.500	262	272
Detroit	4	8	0	.333	300	315

WEST

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
San Francisco	8	3	1	.708	289	171
Seattle	7	5	0	.583	242	202
St. Louis	5	6	1	.458	221	267
Arizona	4	8	0	.333	186	234

WEEK 14

Thursday's game
All Times Eastern
Denver at Oakland, 8:20 p.m.
Sunday's games
St. Louis at Buffalo, 1 p.m.
Dallas at Cincinnati, 1 p.m.
Baltimore at Washington, 1 p.m.
San Diego at Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
Kansas City at Cleveland, 1 p.m.
N.Y. Jets at Jacksonville, 1 p.m.
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Indianapolis, 1 p.m.
Chicago at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Atlanta at Carolina, 1 p.m.
Miami at San Francisco, 4:05 p.m.
New Orleans at N.Y. Giants, 4:25 p.m.
Arizona at Seattle, 4:25 p.m.
Detroit at Green Bay, 8:20 p.m.
Monday's game
Houston at New England, 8:30 p.m.

TRANSACTIONS

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

TEXAS RANGERS — Agreed to terms with OF Chih-Hsien Chiang on a minor league contract.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

ATLANTA BRAVES — Exercised the 2014 option on manager Fredi Gonzalez. Named Dave Holliday and Brad Sloan special assistants to the general manager/major league scouts. Promoted Don Chiti to special assistant to the general manager/pitching development and special assignment. Agreed to terms with C Jose Yepez and C Matt Pagnozzi on minor league contracts.

NFL

LEAGUE OFFICE — Suspended Seattle CB Brandon Browner four games for violating the policy on performance enhancing substances.
BUFFALO BILLS — Placed DE Chris Kelsay on injured reserve. Signed CB T.J. Heath and G Keith Williams from the practice squad.
GREEN BAY PACKERS — Placed RB Johnny White on injured reserve. Signed RB Ryan Grant.
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS — Signed LB Jamaal Westerman.
MIAMI DOLPHINS — Placed T Jake Long on injured reserve. Released DB Anderson Russell. Signed T Patrick Brown and DB Tyrone Culver.
SAN DIEGO CHARGERS — Placed LB Antwan Barnes on injured reserve. Re-signed OL Reggie Wells.
TENNESSEE TITANS — Signed OL Kyle DeVan and T Daniel Baldridge. Placed T David Stewart and S Robert Johnson on injured reserve.

CFL

WINNIPEG BLUE BOMBERS — Named Kyle Walters assistant general manager and director of Canadian scouting.

NHL

DETROIT RED WINGS — Reassigned D Gleason Fournier from Grand Rapids (AHL) to Toledo (ECHL).

AHL

PROVIDENCE BRUINS — Returned F Justin Courtnall to South Carolina (ECHL). Called up F Tyler Randall from South Carolina.
SPRINGFIELD FALCONS —Assigned LW Wade MacLeod to Evansville (ECHL).

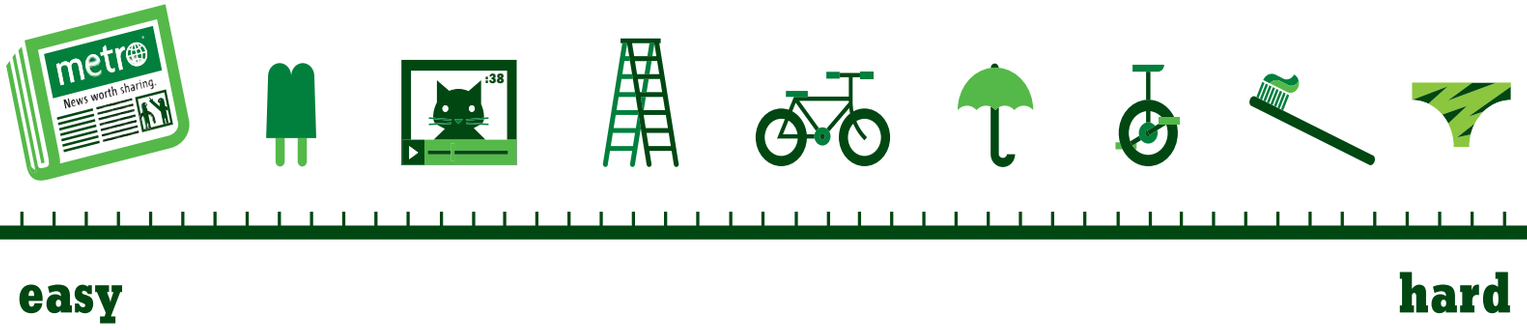
OLYMPICS

IOC — Stripped the 2004 Olympic medals from Ukrainian shot putter Yuriy Bilonog, Belarussian hammer thrower Ivan Tskikhan, Russian shot putter Svetlana Krivelyova and Belarussian discus thrower Irina Yatchenko for doping.

MLS

SPORTING KANSAS CITY — Acquired D/M Josh Gardner from Montreal for a 2013 second-round draft pick, and exercised Gardner's contract option.

Sharability



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* Kids Etc

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LOOKING TO MAKE A CAREER CHANGE?

Read metrowork every Monday & Wednesday.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
If you start something new today, there is every chance it will succeed — so get busy! Mars in the career area of your chart gives you the drive and the ambition you will need to undertake a major new project.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Play to your strengths today and you won't go far wrong. Decide what it is that means the most to you and focus on it to the exclusion of everything else. If others say you are being selfish, take it as a compliment!

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You now have the drive and the determination to accomplish something out of the ordinary. The fact that others say it cannot be done — or should not be done — will encourage you to prove them wrong. You love a challenge.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
A breakthrough of some kind is possible but you have to be proactive. If you just sit there waiting for events to come round your way, you may be waiting a very long time. What can you do to speed things along?

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Good luck will come to you over the next 24 hours but not in the form of material things. Most likely, it will be in the shape of a friend whose wise words are worth more than all the gold you could carry.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You are under fortunate stars at the moment and if you don't quite believe that now, you will start to believe it over the next few days. The more you think and act lucky, the more luck you will attract.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It is probably going too far to claim that you can transform your life over the next 24 hours but you can certainly change it in important ways. You are already moving in the right direction. All you have to do is take longer strides.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 2 04 - Nov. 22
If you feel compelled to move in a new direction, you must not fight against it. It may seem strange to you now but over the next few days you will see that it is entirely to your benefit. Trust your instincts.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Why are you so defensive? Why do you insist on believing that the world is against you and you need to protect yourself? It's time to snap out of it. Reality is what you want it to be, so lighten up and live.

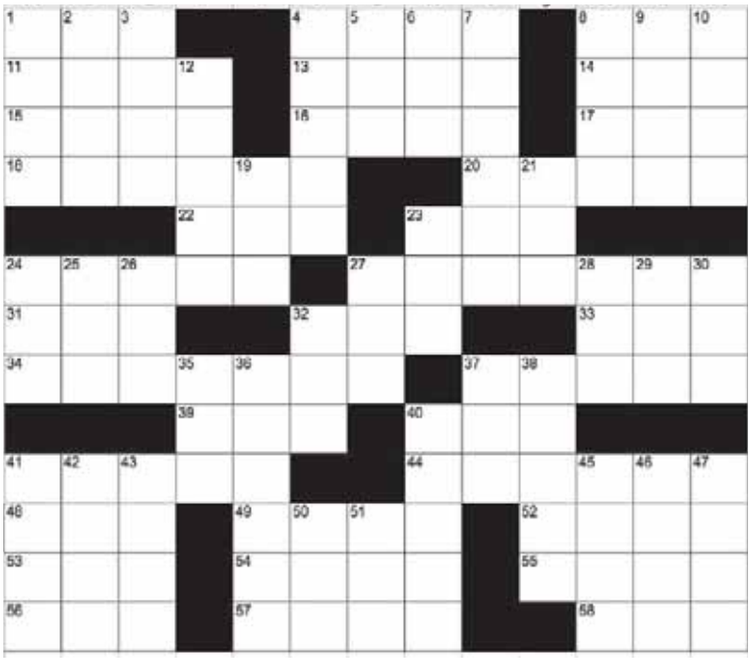
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Put yourself in the spotlight today so that employers and others in authority can see who you are and what you can do. Yes, some people may think you are being too pushy but better that than you not pushing at all.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you want to make changes then now is the time. Don't take it as a bad sign if certain people try to talk you out of it or place obstacles in your path. They're just afraid you'll succeed. And you will.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Some people never stop moaning about how tough life is, but it isn't true. Each day can be a new beginning and each day can be full of every joy imaginable. Make love and laughter your watchwords today. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword

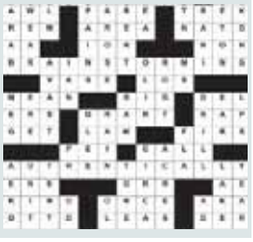
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Actor James Van — Beek
4. Cigarette substances
8. Globe
11. Brainstorm
13. Beatles Meter Maid
14. By way of
15. Glitch or hitch
16. Paradise
17. Height abbr.
18. Vacation necessity
20. Wooded valleys
22. Volleyball need
23. "I am — "
24. Scolds
27. Peter Falk drama
31. Bullring cheer
32. Food morsel for Mister Ed
33. Dinghy mover
34. Chic
37. Over yonder
39. Want ad abbr.
40. Ocean
41. Trample
44. Grease pencil, for one
48. Hit lightly
49. Dueling sword
52. Yearn
53. Letter after ka in Spanish
54. Math calculation
55. Halt
56. Ink holder
57. Ogle
58. Winding curve

Down
1. Computer data holder
2. Charlotte Rae on The Facts of Life
3. Paper quantity
4. Halloween candy
5. Pitch in
6. Map abbr.
7. Summer shoe
8. Racetrack shape
9. Brook
10. Belfry dwellers
12. Broker
19. Matter for the courts
21. Aussie bird
23. Tippler
24. Eggs
25. — in the Family
26. Indicates maiden name
27. Family pet
28. One of The Three Stooges
29. Cheers was one
30. Source for raw metal
32. Toronto province
35. Herd
36. Implore
37. Some like it hot
38. Heavenly strings
40. Daub
41. Ladder rung
42. Yarn
43. — Mike with Mike Bullard
45. Stringed toy
46. The Dukes of Hazzard spin-off
47. Bodybuilder's count
50. Prior to
51. Wide shoe spec

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

See today's answers metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

6		9		1	5			3
	8		9					7
	2		7				1	
9							5	
		6	8		9	7		
	1							4
	5				7		9	
3					4		8	
8				1	2		3	

Yesterday's Sudoku

8	2	5	3	6	9	1	4	7
9	3	4	8	1	7	2	6	5
1	7	6	4	2	5	8	3	9
2	5	3	6	7	8	4	9	1
4	9	7	2	3	1	6	5	8
6	1	8	9	5	4	7	2	3
3	4	9	7	8	6	5	1	2
7	6	1	5	9	2	3	8	4
5	8	2	1	4	3	9	7	6

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CITY: 10.1L/100 KM

Limited model shown

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